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PUBLIC PEACE AND QUIETNESS
THE FRUITS OF
CHRISTIAN TRUTH.

PUBLIC PEACE AND QUIETNESS THE FRUITS OF
CHRISTIAN TRUTH;

A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED IN THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF CHESTER,

ON SUNDAY, JUNE 26, 1836;

BEING THE

ANNIVERSARY OF THE KING'S ACCESSION TO THE THRONE.

BY

WILLIAM AINGER, D. D.

PREBENDARY OF CHESTER,

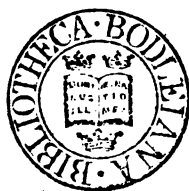
AND PRINCIPAL OF THE CLERICAL COLLEGE OF ST. BEE'S.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. G. AND F. RIVINGTON,
AND J. SEACOME, CHESTER.

1836.

695.



A SERMON.

1 TIMOTHY, II. 1, 2, 3, 4.

I EXHORT THEREFORE, THAT FIRST OF ALL, SUPPLICATIONS, PRAYERS, INTERCESSIONS, AND GIVING OF THANKS, BE MADE FOR ALL MEN ;

FOR KINGS, AND FOR ALL THAT ARE IN AUTHORITY ; THAT WE MAY LEAD A QUIET AND PEACEABLE LIFE IN ALL GODLINESS AND HONESTY.

FOR THIS IS GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE IN THE SIGHT OF GOD OUR SAVIOUR ;

WHO WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED, AND TO COME TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH.

In the Form of Prayer appointed by authority to be used in our churches on the anniversary of the King's Accession, the three first verses of my text, have been selected to be read in place of the usual sentences at the opening of the service. No words could be more appropriate. They are, in fact, St. Paul's own exhortation applied emphatically to the very case in hand. They are the words in which he enjoins Timothy, whom he had set as bishop over the church at Ephesus, to make provision, in that church, for the performance of a duty to which we are on this day more especially called. I must not omit to remark, however, that whilst they are thus peculiarly applicable to the occasion of this

day's solemnity, they afford, at the same time, an ample and conclusive vindication of the practice prescribed in our liturgy, and followed in our regular public devotions ;—the daily practice of offering our common supplications not only “ for all sorts and conditions of men,” in general, but also, in particular, “ for the king and for all that are put in authority under him.” There are indeed those who tell us, that the business of religion is desecrated by the introduction of what they choose to call “ state prayers.” Suffice it for the present to reply, that not so thought our apostle.

I shall not attempt nicely to distinguish the shades of signification which the almost synonymous terms employed in the first verse of my text, may perhaps admit of. It will be enough to observe, that all the different forms which our petitions that God would confer blessings on mankind, or avert evils from them, can assume, seem to be comprehended under the description of “supplications, prayers, and intercessions ;” whilst the “giving of thanks,” whether for such blessings bestowed, or for a deliverance from such evils, is with manifest propriety added to complete the enumeration. Now St. Paul exhorts Timothy, nay exhorts him “ first of all,” that all these be made in the christian church “ for all men ; for kings, and for all that are in authority.” It is clear, then, that he represents this as a duty of primary importance. The grounds on which he does so, invite our more attentive consideration. These appear to be mainly two : and they may

furnish scope for the further observations which I have at this time to offer to you. I shall accordingly arrange those observations under the two following heads :—first, our own benefit as members of a christian community; secondly, the declared will and purpose of Almighty God with regard to the salvation of mankind. The former of these heads is plainly adverted to in the terms, “ that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty :” the latter head is brought before us in the third verse, “ for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who,” we are distinctly reminded in the next verse, (and I have on that account subjoined it to the other three in the enunciation of my text,) “ Who—will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

First, then, our own benefit as members of a christian community, is proposed by the apostle as a reason why christians should make their common supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings for all men. So intricate and inseparable is the connection of men with one another in this world, so various and unavoidable the influence which they mutually receive and impart, that strictly speaking no two human beings are allowed to hold themselves, under whatever contingences, utterly independent on each other. Even in the most extreme case that could be supposed, therefore, it might be consistently maintained, that if God directs all the events of life by his providence, a

regard for our own interest would prompt us to address to him our prayers and praises, not for ourselves and those nearest to us only, but also for all mankind without exception. It is obvious, however, that among those by whom the welfare of the greatest number is influenced, and influenced in the greatest degree, we must reckon kings and such as are in authority. St. Paul's exhortation in the text, seems partly to be founded in this view. And let us not forget, that the kings and magistrates who bore rule in those days, and for some ages after, were not christians; but for the most part violently opposed the christian religion, and cruelly persecuted its professors. The apostle recognises, nevertheless, their rightful power, as derived from the appointment of God himself: he teaches submission to that power, even when exercised most oppressively; and, as we see, in the words of my text, directs supplications, prayers, and intercessions to be made for those who so exercised it,—not merely, be it observed, upon that extended principle of charity, which should lead us to beg that God would “pardon all our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and turn their hearts,” but expressly with a view to our own social and individual advantage,—“that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.” The precept was not uttered in vain. It was followed in such simplicity and godly sincerity, as to bring about the most beneficial of all political revolutions which the history of the world has recorded, and by the most legitimate means.

For even heathen despots began at length to perceive, that the christians were their best and most faithful subjects; so that instead of making havoc of the church, the time arrived when, according to prophecy, kings became its nursing-fathers, and queens its nursing mothers.^(a) Then truly was there occasion for "giving of thanks." From that time forth "the kingdoms of the world" so far advanced to be "the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ,"^(b) that the righteous and beneficent spirit of our holy religion gradually exercised an influence over the enactments of the civil code in divers countries; whilst, on the other hand, the laws of the ecclesiastical community received the sanction of the secular power, and the monarch rejoiced to profess himself the temporal head of the church. Then were the disciples of Jesus no longer driven from city to city, and compelled to meet in darkness and retirement to perform the rites of their worship. Christian temples began to be erected; those who minister in sacred things to be had in honour; the possessors of the soil were encouraged to dedicate a portion of their inheritance for the perpetual religious instruction and spiritual comfort of their vassals and poorer brethren; and such gifts cast into the treasury of God, were secured to the holy uses to which they had been devoted, by all the ratifications which human law can impart.

(a) Isaiah xlix, 23.

(b) Rev. xi, 15.

All this happened, as we have said, in accordance with the sure word of prophecy. But that word had also spoken of a great and grievous perversion of christianity itself, which was soon to follow; a “mystery of iniquity,”^(a) which originating in the corrupt principles of human nature, was “already working,”^(b) even in the apostolic age, although not then openly developed. During that age its influence was chiefly discovered in those various schisms and heresies which the authority of the apostles and first fathers of the church could with difficulty suffice to allay. But times succeeded when the evil disposition was no longer so to be restrained, and when the temporary check which external danger had opposed to its increase, was removed: and “then was that man of sin revealed.”^(c) Inordinate earthly ambition sought and found the fullest accomplishment of her most extravagant hopes and projects, in professed alliance with the christian name. Then was exhibited the portentous spectacle of a Christian Bishop, who claimed it as his prerogative to dispose of crowns and sceptres at his will, placing his foot upon the necks of kings,—nay even arrogating to himself the attributes of Jehovah, so that “he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he

(a) 2 Thess. ii. 7

(b) Ib.

(c) 2 Thess. ii. 3.

is God.”^(a) The perversion became total in the Western Church. It extended its ramifications to every part of the ecclesiastical system. Corrupt doctrine was brought to support corrupt practice ; and both were sustained “ with signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.”^(b) The provisions which had been made by piety and charity, for the christian edification of the people, were then diverted from their purpose, and the monastic orders usurped the possessions of the parochial priesthood. By means of auricular confession and various other devices of the prince of darkness, a tyranny was established, against which neither power, nor obscurity, afforded any protection ; which rendered all the dearest possessions of life insecure ; which might dissolve at pleasure all the bonds of loyalty, of affection, of consanguinity. Superstition thus reigned universally triumphant,—until, under the wise and merciful ordination of divine Providence, the very extravagance of the mischief operated to produce its remedy. Both kings and their subjects at length aroused themselves to shake off an intolerable yoke of bondage. But unhappily “ the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.”^(c) Mixed with the holier principles which sought only the

(a) 2 Thess. ii, 4.

(b) 2 Thess. ii, 9, 10.

(c) James i, 20.

recovery of "the liberty wherewith Christ had made men free,"^(a) were gross elements and sordid aims. These were actively and vehemently directed to the demolition of all abuses, real or pretended, but led not to the restoration of primitive truth and order. In many countries of Europe the legitimate episcopal government of the church was lost irrecoverably, through the jealousy occasioned by past misrule; whilst in other countries, where it was retained in name, its essential and salutary power was seriously impaired. And the like may be said of the temporal possessions of the church. Instead of being restored to the wholesome purposes from which popery had abstracted them, they were in our own land shamefully squandered to gratify the insatiable rapacity of profligate courtiers, by an unprincipled monarch, whose example in this particular found too ready an imitation in subsequent reigns. The result became apparent in the next age. An impoverished and degraded clergy, destitute of those appliances which were needed for the instruction and christian edification of the people, was found unequal to sustain the combined assaults of ignorant and enthusiastical sectarians of every denomination, who "turning religion into rebellion and faith into

(a) Gal. v. 1.

faction," overthrew both the altar and the throne, and left a spirit of fanaticism, infidelity, and insubordination as the inheritance of those who should come after.

It is not my purpose to do more than glance at events too prominent to be overlooked in the history of our country. I will, therefore, content myself with remarking, that a course which was heretofore thus miserable in its tendency and consequences, could hardly be found so salutary now, as those would persuade us to imagine, who seem anxiously disposed to try the like experiment over again: disposed to try it, do I say? who have already proceeded far towards the accomplishment of it, in one important integral portion of the United Church of this Empire. But we live in an age which openly professes to despise and discard the wisdom that experience might teach! "That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty," is, as I have stated, the great object, so far as God's providential governance of the affairs of this world is concerned, for the sake of which, St. Paul "exhorts that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made" in the Christian Church "for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority." The attainment of this primary object is scarcely more incompatible with

a state of absolute persecution, than it is with a state of discord, confusion, and insecurity. To avert these fearful evils, the bane both of public and of private virtue and happiness, must, then, be alike the desire of the patriot and the christian. But let us not forget, that in a nation like our own, where free institutions have long existed and are daily further extending their influence, it is not even in theory, the absolute will of the sovereign which coerces the people; and it is quite undeniable in fact, that the force of public opinion must essentially bias and control all the measures of government—whether for good or for evil: so that if the principles of sound and pure religion shall ever unhappily lack the Monarch's sanction and encouragement, the calamity may be ascribed less to a dereliction of duty on his part, than on our own. Great reason then have we, whatever our station, to join heartily in that petition in which we, on this day, implore Almighty God in behalf of our king; "Direct all his counsels and endeavours to thy glory and the welfare of his people; and give us grace to obey him cheerfully and willingly for conscience' sake; that neither our sinful passions, nor our private interests, may disappoint his cares for the public good." Never, I will venture add, could the petition be more seasonable. For, can it be denied, that there are too many, and those too

prominent among us, who instead of desiring that themselves, or others, should "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty," might seem rather to regard a turbulent and contentious life, without either godliness, or honesty, as the consummation of their wishes and endeavours? "Sinful passions" and "private interests" may, indeed, sufficiently account for these pestilent efforts of such as "use their liberty for a cloak of maliciousness,"^(a) or "suppose that gain is godliness."^(b) But such are not the servants of God, or the friends of mankind. No! "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace, of them that make peace."^(c) "O pray for the peace of our Jerusalem!"^(d) "Seek peace and ensue it!"^(e) "Peace on earth" was the benediction pronounced when our Saviour, "the Prince of Peace,"^(f) first came down to tabernacle among us: "peace" was the inheritance which he bequeathed to his disciples when he took his departure. How then is the permanent possession of this best of all earthly gifts to be secured?

The text connects it, we find, directly with the very design of God in the plan of human redemption. We enter here on the latter division of our subject. "It is good and acceptable

(a) 1 Peter ii, 16. (b) 1 Tim. vi, 5. (c) James iii, 18. (d) Ps. cxxii, 6.

(e) 1 Peter iii, 11. (f) Is. ix, 6.

in God's sight," that we should pray to him for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority;" that, in answer to our prayers, we may be graciously permitted, and disposed, to "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." There is no other safe foundation for such results than the principles of our holy religion rightly taught and sincerely practised. This conclusion seems to be implied in the very term "godliness" as it is here introduced by the apostle in connection with "honesty." Thus united they signify, in one word, "righteousness." "And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."^(a) Yes! in this world as well as in the next: and the promise extends to churches and kingdoms as well as to individuals. If this state of blessedness has never yet been realized on earth since that early day when "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul,"^(b) to what causes are we to ascribe our disappointment? Is God unfaithful,—or have Christians "erred concerning the truth?"^(c) "God our Saviour," says the text, "will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." If then they "perish," it must be "because they receive not the love of the truth,

(a) Is. xxxii, 17,

(b) Acts iv, 32.

(c) 2 Tim. ii, 18.

that they might be saved."^(a) "To this end was I born," declares our Lord, "and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth: every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?"^(b) There are not a few, in these our days, who bear the name of Christians, and yet would seem to ask the same question in the very temper of the Roman procurator. Truth is deemed by these persons, to be alike compatible with any, and every, interpretation of the word of God. It is considered to be equally the claim of those who worship Christ as a divine redeemer, "God our Saviour," and those who merely respect him as a wise and inspired teacher; of those who believe that God "will have all men to be saved" by him, and those who hold that he wills the salvation of only some chosen few: in short there is no variety of opinion with regard either to the nature, or the offices, or the doctrines of Christ, which they are not ready to include within the limits of "the truth"—provided only the facts, or rather some which they choose to regard, not very consistently, as the leading and essential facts, of the New Testament history, be not denied. Where these very liberal principles are adopted, of course the terms heresy and schism

(a) 2 Thess. ii, 10

(b) John xviii, 37, 38.

became empty sounds : and of course likewise, no regard for the promotion of God's truth, or man's salvation, should induce the Christian legislator, or the Christian magistrate, to sanction one sect, or one creed, rather than another. If we are not altogether prepared to adopt this sweeping conclusion, we may perhaps be disposed, though at the risk of being charged with narrow bigotry, to think, that the form of religion, which is best calculated to promote the quietness, peaceableness, godliness, and honesty of men here, and their eternal happiness hereafter, is best entitled to the countenance and support of kings and those in authority : and that they may so encourage and promote it, we shall ever be ready, as St. Paul exhorts, to offer up our supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks in their behalf, to Him who hath " taught us in his holy word, that the hearts of kings are in his rule and governance, and that he doth dispose and turn them as seemeth best to his godly wisdom."

The argument, then, stands thus. Our social and individual advantage is essentially involved in the political state of our age and nation ; in the possession of good laws and institutions, and in the good administration of them. This will be granted on all hands. I may, I think, assume further, that civil polity, to be efficient or secure, requires to be based on religion. And with us

there will be few who venture to dispute, that this religion must be Christianity ; that is to say, Christian truth,—if the previous statements are sound and valid. Christian truth, therefore, is to be maintained even on the ground of mere political expediency. It is moreover to be maintained in conformity with the declared will of God, “ who hath called Christian princes to the defence of his faith, and hath made it their duty to promote the spiritual welfare, together with the temporal interest, of their people.” And I allege, that this conclusion is to be inferred from the whole tenor of St. Paul’s directions to Timothy, in the passage under our consideration.

But what I have advanced with regard to Christian doctrine, will hold, to a certain extent at least, with regard also to church discipline and church government. For, so far as these are derived from, and depend on, Christ’s authority, they are in reality, a part of Christian truth—whether they relate to the due commission of the clergy, or the efficacy of the sacraments administered by their hands. Forms and ceremonies strictly such, may indeed be, and always have been, diverse in different ages and countries. But it is not of these I am here speaking ; though with regard even to these it may be alleged, that “ God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all

churches of the saints.”^(a) But as to public preaching, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, the case is widely different. Therein “a man can receive nothing except it be given him from above.”^(b) If we would either instruct, or dispense covenanted blessings, with authority, we must be able to shew our commission to do so, derived from Him, who, at the termination of his own work on earth, sent forth his apostles that they and those duly appointed by them, with their successors to the end of time, might be the shepherds of his flock : and “he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.”^(c) He usurps that which belongs not to him of right. It is for those to clear their consciences from this imputation, to whom it may appear to apply. We judge not others. But we vindicate ourselves and the true branch of Christ’s Holy Catholic Church established—though I fear, not adequately appreciated—in this kingdom.

Let me, then, be permitted to add, that we unworthily surrender the blessings and privileges which belong to us, and recede unwisely from our proper vantage ground, when we are satisfied merely to take up our position—undistinguished save by the accidental and invidious circumstance of our alliance with the State,—among all the various sects and denominations which may be included within the term,

(a) I Cor. xiv, 33.

(b) John iii, 27.

(c) John x, 1.

Protestant. Common cause we may be well content to make with them, so far as a disclaimer of the errors and corruptions of Popery, and a resistance to the tyrannous domination of the See of Rome are concerned. And good service have some among them herein rendered to the cause of truth,—for which we owe them our respect and regard. Thus far they have manfully stood up for the truth. But “the truth” is not necessarily “the whole truth and nothing but the truth.” It is not so in this instance. Protestantism is a negative rather than an affirmative designation. And however this may be overlooked by us, it is never overlooked by that arrogant and ambitious Church which cannot defend the Apostolical succession, or the legitimate authority, of her own Priesthood, without at the same time establishing that of ours ;—and who with Jesuitical skill, seeks, therefore, to have our claims merged in the pretensions of the mass of protestants ; not a few of whom are now seen to be most unnaturally leagued with her, in rancorous hostility against us, the possessors, by just inheritance, of those seats which once were hers. “As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also *diminish* thee.”^(a) The judgment hath passed upon her. The like may befall us if we hold not fast our integrity. But never

(a) Ez. v. 11,

be it forgotten, that when we utter a humble hope that our church may long continue to stand as "the pillar and ground of the truth,"^(a) we mean to advert to the necessity of faithfulness, not in the ministers of the church exclusively; but (as the very term Church implies) in the united congregation of Christian people, clergy and laity, which constitute it. Needless as this remark may be thought, it is yet called forth by the looseness of notions which exist, and by language which we sometimes hear. Brethren, in this view our most solemn obligations and our dearest interests differ not from your own. "Are we therefore become your enemies because we tell you the truth?"^(b) "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. For we are glad when we are weak and ye are strong: and this also we wish, even your perfection."^(c) "We preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."^(d) We would consent to "suffer reproach," and even "take joyfully the spoiling of our goods," so that we might thereby become more profitable to you, and you might "have in heaven a better and an enduring substance."^(e) The temporalities of the Church we value chiefly as the means for propagating and establishing Christian truth. Thus, "being defamed, we intreat;"^[f] and we tell you, as St. Peter warned the disciples in

(a) I Tim. iii, 15. (b) Gal. iv, 16. (c) 2 Cor. xiii. 8, 9. (d) 2 Cor. iv, 5.
(e) Heb. x, 34. (f) I Cor. iv. 13.

his day, "There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies,—even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction :—and many shall follow their pernicious ways ; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of : and through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you."^(a) Another characteristic of such men is, that they "despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities."^(b) But we, in exercise of the office, lawfully committed to us, to guide your devotions, will not cease to "exhort you to make supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks for all men ; for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty ;" admonishing you, that "this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour ; who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the Truth."

To Him, the King of Kings, be ascribed all honour and glory, all worship and dominion, in heaven and on earth, now, henceforth, and for evermore.—
AMEN.

(a) 2 Pet. ii, 1, 2, 3.

(b) Jude 8.

**THE PEOPLE OF GOD CALLED UPON TO BUILD HIS
HOUSE OF PRAYER:**

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH, COLCHESTER,

MAY XI, MDCCCXXVI.

ON THE OCCASION OF LAYING THE

FOUNDATION STONE OF THE NEW CHURCH

TO BE ERECTED IN THE

PARISH OF ST. BOTOLPH, COLCHESTER.

BY THE REV.

JAMES S. M. ANDERSON, M.A.

**CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO THE QUEEN,
AND PERPETUAL CURATE OF ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, BRIGHTON.**

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

**THE PROFITS OF THE SALE OF THIS SERMON WILL BE GIVEN TO THE FUNDS
RAISED FOR THE BUILDING AND ENDOWMENT OF THE CHURCH.**

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TO
THE VENERABLE
WILLIAM ROWE LYALL, M.A.
ARCHDEACON OF COLCHESTER,
AND TO THE
CLERGY OF THE SAME ARCHDEACONRY,
THE FOLLOWING SERMON,
PREACHED BEFORE THEM,
AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST,
IS DEDICATED,
WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF RESPECT,
BY
THEIR OBEDIENT AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

THE only reason which has induced me to comply with the request made to publish this Sermon, is a desire to promote the work for which it was preached.

The Parish of St. Botolph, in the town of Colchester, comprises a population of nearly three thousand souls ; and has had no Church since the time of the civil war, when the Priory of St. Botolph, whose venerable ruins are still remaining, was destroyed during the long and disastrous siege which the Town then sustained. It possesses no endowment towards the support of a Minister, beyond the Surplice Fees and

Easter Offerings, which do not exceed Twenty Pounds a year. Its spiritual cure is annexed to the Rectory of All-Saints, a Benefice which itself is but scantily endowed; and both these, together with three other Parishes in the same Town, are in the patronage of the Master and Fellows of Balliol College, Oxford. From their body has the desire to rebuild the Church now emanated. More than one attempt was made by the late Incumbent to enter upon this work; and they who are acquainted with the local circumstances connected with it, will not be at a loss to know to whom its successful commencement and progress, at the present time, are, under the Divine blessing, mainly to be ascribed.

The Building is arranged to hold upwards of a thousand persons; and it is proposed to endow it with an income of about 100*l.* a year. A large sum has already been raised for these objects. The Church Building Society have voted 1000*l.*; and about 3000*l.* more have been raised by private subscription: but, in consequence of the great expenditure which it has been necessary to incur,

in order to obtain an eligible site, and to effect the removal of some old buildings which stood immediately between the intended New Church, and the ruins of the Priory, the sum of 1400*l.* is still necessary to complete the undertaking¹.

The call is an urgent one. They who make it, have given the best proof of their own sense of its imperative obligation. And, in the full conviction that their cause is that of truth and holiness, and that their dependence is upon Him who is the Redeemer and Sanctifier of His Church, I pray that He may prosper the work of their hands, and make it an instrument of blessedness to them and to their children for ever.

J. S. M. A.

Kemptown, Brighton ;
May 16, 1836.

¹ Subscriptions will be received at the Banks of Messrs. Mills and Co., and Messrs. Round and Co. in Colchester ; by Hankeys and Co. 7, Fenchurch-street, and by Esdaile and Co. 21, Lombard-street, London.

S E R M O N,

&c.

 HAGGAI, i. 2—4.

“ Thus, speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord’s house should be built. Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai, the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste ?”

THE period at which the prophet Haggai was raised up by the Lord, to speak these words of rebuke unto his brethren, is specified with more than ordinary distinctness in the sacred volume ;—it being expressly stated, in the first verse of the present chapter, to have been “ in the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month.” Now, the second year of Darius the king, was the seventeenth year after the return of the Jewish people from their captivity in Babylon, according to the proclamation of Cyrus. And, upon referring to the Book of

Ezra, (which is chiefly occupied, as you remember, in describing the effects of that proclamation, viz. the re-settlement of the Jews in Palestine, and the building of the second temple) it will be seen that, after the foundation of that temple was laid, the progress of the work was stopped by an order which came to that effect from Artaxerxes, (or Smerdis) who had usurped the Persian throne upon the death of Ahasuerus (or Cambyses) a few months before the time of Darius. "Then ceased (we are told) the work of the house of God which is in Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia." These words form the last verse of the fourth chapter of the Book of Ezra; and if we carry on our attention immediately to the next chapter, we shall find the sacred historian thus proceeding:—"Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah, the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them. Then rose up Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua, the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem; and with them were the prophets of God helping them."

These two portions, therefore, of the sacred volume to which I have adverted, directly illustrate and confirm each other. In the words of the prophet and of the historian, we have the same description of the time, the place, the persons, the

work that was to be accomplished. The rulers of God's people, brought again from the waters of Babylon to their own, their favoured Zion, were striving to lift up from its fallen state the temple in which their fathers worshipped, and "with them were the prophets of God helping them." Great and manifold were the difficulties before them and around them. The open opposition of their Samaritan adversaries, the secret intrigues and jealousies at the Persian Court, the feuds and animosities among themselves,—all these things tended to retard the work, by weakening the strength and exciting the fears of those engaged in it. True, that many of the obstacles which at first impeded their progress had been removed, and others in a great degree diminished; but still, vast numbers of the Jewish people were slow to complete the sanctuary of God, and restore its solemn services; and for this cause the reproachful accents of Haggai's question in the text were sounded in their ears.

Time was indeed when other thoughts had animated the hearts, and other purposes had employed the energies of the Lord's people. Time was, when the Psalmist had sworn thus unto the Lord, and vowed this vow unto the Almighty God of Jacob:—"I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house, nor climb up into my bed; I will not suffer mine eyes to sleep, nor mine eyelids to slumber, neither the temples of my head to take

any rest, until I find out a place for the temple of the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob¹." But what traces of this eager devotion, this holy resolution, this instant and unwearied energy, were to be found now in Judah's race? Though they had been delivered from Babylonish bondage, and brought once more to the place which the Lord had chosen "out of the whole earth, to place his name there;" though they were instructed in his law, confessed his glory, and commanded to draw near unto him with worship, they nevertheless shrunk from bearing the weight of this sacred obligation, and bribed their slumbering consciences to rest by saying that "the time was not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built."

Why then, were their own houses ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion? No time had been accounted too soon to seize upon the appliances and means of earthly comfort,—no time too soon to restore the privileges, which their fathers had possessed, of eating every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig-tree, and drinking every one the waters of his cistern². Why then was the creature pampered, and the Creator dishonoured? Why was the gift enjoyed, and the Giver forgotten? David had thought it a reproach that he should dwell in a house of cedars, whilst

¹ Psalm cxxxii. 2—6.

² 2 Kings xviii. 31; Isa. xxxvi. 16.

the ark of the covenant of the Lord remained under curtains¹; and Solomon finished not the building of his own house, nor the house of the forest of Lebanon, nor the house for Pharaoh's daughter; still less turned he his thoughts towards the structure of Tadmor in the wilderness, or the fenced cities of Bethoron, until first he had reared up the beauty and the glory of the holy temple². But these, the degenerate sons of Judah and Jerusalem, reversed the order. They were content to visit the borders of their father-land, to gladden their eyes with the prospect of its plains, its streams, its mountains—to enjoy the shelter and adornment of its dwellings—and yet could leave the foundations of the Lord's house, abased and desolate, amid the ruins of its former grandeur.

Was not this to despise the loving-kindness, and to abuse the choicest mercies of their Almighty God? Nay, was it not to renew the very sinfulness of their fathers, who aforetime had dwelt at ease in Zion, and had thereby provoked the sentence of captivity to be pronounced against them? They had laid “upon beds of ivory, (as the prophet Amos declared to them) and stretched themselves upon the couches, and eaten the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; they had chanted to the sound of the viol, and invented to themselves instruments of

¹ 2 Sam. vii. 2. 1 Chron. xvii. 1. ² 2 Chron. 1—6.

music like David ; they had drunk wine in bowls, and anointed them with chief ointments ; but *they were not grieved* (and here was the burden of their sin) *for the affliction of Joseph*. Therefore (the prophet told them) should they go away captive with the first that went captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves should be removed¹." Now, if such had been the transgression, and such the punishment in store for the profligate and wanton abusers of God's gifts, in the days that were past,—if such abuse had robbed the heart of sympathy for the affliction of God's people, and the arm of the invader had therefore been permitted to drag his proud, and selfish, and rebellious children from their home, and "scatter them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not²;"—how much more grievous was it to renew the transgression, at the very time when God's mercies had been renewed ; how much more perilous was it to lose, not merely concern for the affliction of Joseph, but concern for the honour of that God who had given, unto the house of Joseph, the blessed promise of redemption.

No marvel that the Lord's prophet should address the message of stern remonstrance to such a people, and ask, "Is it a time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?"

¹ Amos v. 4—8.

² Zech. vii. 14.

But I seek not to dwell further upon the emphatic righteousness of this rebuke of the prophet, because every heart must feel the scope and fitness of its application. Neither would I stop to illustrate the fearful stubbornness of the people who so tampered with the privileges and duties belonging to them; because, however dark and humiliating were the stains that deformed their character, or however correct might be the description which attempts to delineate them, we have an interest in the present Scripture, of far more practical and constraining urgency than that of merely passing an opinion upon the painful realities of historic truth. It would be but a kind of dramatic excitement, at once transitory and unprofitable, to gaze, for a few moments, upon the picture of Jerusalem's children, slowly and reluctantly girding themselves up to the task of rebuilding Jehovah's temple, and then to turn aside and straightway forget what manner of men we ourselves are. We may indeed have discerned the mote in the eye of our brother, but we shall have forgotten the beam that is darkening our own.

Let not this be laid to our charge, my brethren. Rather let us call to mind the mysterious mercies to which that temple, with all its ritual of prayer and praise, was preparatory and subordinate; and confess, in very deed, the obligation which is laid upon ourselves by virtue of the same mercies. Haggai,

remember, predicted that the Lord of Hosts should fill that house, which the Jews were then building, with his glory¹. And was it not even so? What, though the material splendour of its building and possessions were as nothing in the sight of those who had seen that "house in her first glory²;" and "many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men," remembering those things, "wept with a loud voice³," when they saw its foundations laid! What, though the ark of the blessed covenant was no longer to be seen within its sanctuary,—nor golden cherubim shadowing the mercy-seat,—nor the bright Shechinah indicating the divine presence; what, though no holy fire blazed afresh upon the altar,—no Urim and Thummim beamed from the radiant vesture of the priest,—no spirit of prophecy was there to guide and enlighten the worshippers that thronged its courts,—yet still, the glory of this latter house was greater (as Haggai predicted that it should be⁴;) than the glory of the former; because "the desired of all nations," Christ Jesus the Lord, came unto it, and taught daily in it, and by Him did the Lord of Hosts there "give peace⁵" unto his people.

And remember, further, that not to the borders of that temple, whose honour the Redeemer then

¹ Hag. ii. 7.

² Hag. ii. 3.

³ Ezra. iii. 12.

⁴ Hag. ii. 9.

⁵ Compare Hag. ii. 7. and 9.

rescued from reproach, was the blessedness of His peace and of His salvation limited; nor yet to one people, nor to one land, do the sacred oracles which communicated it, now speak:—for, where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, there (we are assured) He is in the midst of them¹. The house of prayer, in which God hath promised to make the believer “joyful,” is now become “an house of prayer for all people².” Yea, the whole body of the faithful is made one spiritual building in Christ. For so St. Paul, speaking to the Ephesians of the privileges which they enjoyed, who sometimes were far off, “being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world,” but who were now “made nigh by the blood of Christ,” and “through him had access by one spirit unto the Father,” saith, “Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom the whole building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God, through the Spirit³.” St. Peter, moreover, describes, in like manner, the character of believers, when he

¹ Matt. xviii. 20.

² Isa. lvi. 7.

³ Ephes. ii. 12—22.

saith, that, coming to the Lord, “as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ ¹. Yea, every individual believer is represented by St. Paul, in both his Epistles to the Corinthians, as “the temple of God,” because “the Spirit of God dwelleth in him ² ;” and thereby he saith is accomplished the promise which God had declared aforetime, “I will dwell in them, and walk in them ; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people ³ .”

Seeing then, my brethren, that this prophecy has received part of its accomplishment in ourselves, that “the Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel,” is yet gathering, and yet shall continue to “gather others to him ⁴ ,” according to his good promise ;—seeing that we, “which in time past were not a people, are now the people of God,” and that we, “which had not obtained mercy, have now obtained mercy,”—need I employ the word of exhortation, to persuade you “that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness unto his marvellous light ⁵ :” and “forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5.

² 1 Cor. iii. 16. and vi. 19.

³ 2 Cor. vi. 16.

⁴ Isa. lvi. 8.

⁵ 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.

gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers ; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot¹ ;” that ye should “ therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s².”

Assuredly this conviction, if it find its way to your heart with its proper force, must furnish you with motives to watchfulness and perseverance, infinitely more imperative and enduring, and open to your view prospects infinitely more vast and comprehensive, than any which can be supplied by the transient interests of time or sense. It is, in fact, nothing less than to embody the very spirit of those petitions which Christ hath taught you to repeat, and which this day have fallen from your lips ; to realize, as far as may be permitted amid the weakness of earthly tabernacles, the perfect glory of the things you ask for ; to hallow the name of our Father, which is in heaven, to enlarge the borders of his kingdom, and to do his will on earth, as it is in heaven.

And was not this the work, consecrated by the personal ministry of our great High Priest, when he “ brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel³ ?” For this, he ordained the twelve to preach the kingdom of God, whilst he was yet with them. For this, when he was about to leave the

¹ Pet. i. 18.

² 1 Cor. vi. 20.

³ 2 Tim. i. 10.

world, he commanded them to “go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;” and promised to be with them “alway, even unto the end of the world¹.” For this, the first apostles and their successors carried on “the ministry of reconciliation²,” ordaining “elders in every church,” and commending “them to the Lord, on whom they believed³.” For this, they were exhorted to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; and the things which they had heard among many witnesses, the same they were commanded to commit to faithful men, who should be able to teach others also⁴.

It is no other work than this, which we, this day, are assembled to promote. The Church, of which we are the ordained ministers, is established for no other end than this:—to carry out the saving knowledge of God’s truth, and God’s mercy, through the length and breadth of the land; to bring home to the king upon his throne, and to the peasant in his cottage, the same message of holiness, by the tenour of which they must both stand or fall in the sight of the Almighty; to deliver it unto all men without partiality and without hypocrisy; to confirm it by reference to “the whole counsel of God,” set forth in his sacred volume; to illustrate

¹ Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

² 2 Cor. v. 18.

³ Acts xiv. 23.

⁴ 2 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

it by the ordinances of his grace, appointed for our edification; to shew that the consolations of Divine Love follow you whithersoever ye go, and in whatsoever ye do; that by these, the infant babe is received into the ark of Christ's Church by baptism; by these, his growing intellect is taught the words and works of holiness; by these, the energies of his ripened manhood are devoted to the service of Him who gave it; by these, each hope and fear, each joy and sorrow of his chequered life, is sanctified; and by these, having their perfect work within the heart, may he be sustained, whether in health or sickness, whether in tribulation or wealth; and, when his race is run, his warfare is accomplished, by these, may he depart in peace, for his eyes shall have seen the salvation of the Lord¹. Yea, by these, may the men who weep for him be taught not to be sorry as without hope, for them that sleep in Jesus, but to commit the body of their 'departed brother to the ground, —earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust,—in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself².'

Such are the transcendant mercies of the Gospel ordinances; and to keep up the efficiency of these

¹ Ps. xxiv. 5. Luke ii. 30, 31.

² Burial Service.

means of grace, in places where they are already known and valued; to impart the knowledge of them to others, whose opportunities of enjoying them have been either altogether withheld, or exist only in a limited, or partial form; to uphold them at all times, and amid all men, by a system of operation not temporary, but permanent—not partial, but uniform—a system, not dependent for its support upon the caprice and fashion of the day, but based upon the sure word of Christ, and calmly and consistently proclaiming the joyful tidings of that word, from generation to generation—this is the avowed end and object of an established ministry. For how shall men “call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear, without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent¹?” Men do not so earnestly, or so regularly, provide for the supply of their spiritual, as of their bodily wants, simply because they do not feel the privation to be so great. It is not with the ignorant, and careless, and hardened sinner, as with the sick, or the hungry, or the naked sufferer². The latter *feel* the pressure of their sorrows, and, by an instinctive impulse, spring forward to the quarter where relief or re-

¹ Rom. x. 14, 15.

² See Chalmers on Endowments, p. 436, &c. Dr. Dealtry's Charge, 1834.

medy are to be found; but the former never dream of the dangers of ignorance, or indifference, or unrepented sin, and consequently seek no help, because they desire none. The things which are seen and temporal, are more congenial to our fallen nature, and have a firmer hold upon our affections, than those which are not seen and eternal. It is a more urgent matter to care for things present, than things future; to provide for the body that perisheth, rather than for the soul that liveth; and hence to dwell in our ceiled houses, whilst the house of the Lord lies waste; to think no time too soon to secure the comforts of earth, and any time soon enough to look for the joys of heaven, is a temptation confined not to Judah's land, nor to Judah's people. In our own land, and amid our own people, it finds a parallel. Hence arises the necessity of maintaining the ordinances of Christian worship, in all their purity and truth,—of repeating the Gospel message in all its variety of application,—of being instant in season, and out of season,—of meeting the demands of an increasing population, with increasing efforts,—of multiplying the means of Christian grace, in proportion as the wants, and passions, and prejudices of our brethren multiply: and so casting all our care upon that God who careth for us.

To this end were the people of God, in the days of Haggai, exhorted to restore the glory of his worship; and, in furtherance of the same end, is the

invitation now extended even unto us, to come "into his courts with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise¹." It is only upon this ground,—the ground of its subservience to the public good,—that our National Church is established; and only upon this ground, do we claim the affection and support of upright citizens. We, who have received such a ministry, may well be overcome with a sense of the deep responsibility that is laid upon us; and crave, with most earnest entreaty, the prayers and co-operation of the whole Christian brotherhood. For must it not indeed be confessed that the "harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few²?" that there is still around us a frightful mass of ignorance, and profligacy, and profaneness, whose deep and appalling shadows have not yet been put to flight by the purifying beams of the Sun of righteousness? that they, whose office it is to point to that light, and lead others to the brightness of its rising, are oftentimes borne down amid the din and clamour of conflicting interests, and trampled under foot by the incessant multitude of cares that crowd upon them? The limits, indeed, which originally bounded their respective fields of operation, and within which they might, in earlier days, have found the opportunity of adequately discharging the office entrusted to their hands, may still remain; but

¹ Ps. c. 3.

² Matt. ix. 37.

their utility, as standards whereby to mark and regulate the division of labour, is well-nigh extinguished, amid an overwhelming population¹: so that, in many districts, (as it has been truly and emphatically observed) ‘ the Church is often but as a small and solitary haven, in the midst of a wide and turbulent waste of waters, where one deep of wickedness and ungodliness calleth to another, until their billows threaten to overflow the land².’

¹ In the last Report of the Church Commissioners, it has been clearly proved (with reference to the evil here adverted to), that “ even where every allowance is made for the exertion of those religious bodies which are not in connexion with the Established Church,” a vast proportion of the people, in the populous districts of the metropolis, are left destitute of the opportunities of worship and Christian instruction. It would be useless here to enter into the details by which the truth of this report can be proved; for they are notorious. It is hoped too that the Address which the Bishop of London has recently put forth upon the subject, will be in the hands of all who are concerned (and who amongst us is not concerned?) in remedying such a fearful evil. The simple fact noticed by his Lordship, that, “ omitting all notice of those parishes which contain less than 7,000 inhabitants, there is a population in the metropolis of not less than 1,380,000, with church-room for only 140,000, or little more than one-tenth of the whole,” is enough to kindle into action every spark of sympathy which Christian men can feel for the spiritual wants of their brethren.

² See a Sermon preached at Hertford, in the year 1833, for the benefit of the schools of that town, by the Rev. C. W. Le Bas. There are few compositions which so powerfully describe the miseries of a people who are “ destroyed for lack of knowledge.”

I insist not upon this as a description of all places ; much less do I insist upon it as a description of this place, where, though I am a stranger to most of those whom I now address, I know enough to be assured that there are many advantages enjoyed, which are not possessed by your brethren elsewhere, and that, here are labourers in God's vineyard, faithfully doing the work of evangelists, and rightly dividing the word of truth, as workmen that need not to be ashamed. But notwithstanding this, I know that, in this ancient and venerable Town, there is one Parish, and that comprising a population at once large in amount and poor in substance, which for nearly two hundred years, has been without a Church. The hand of the spoiler has demolished the sanctuary in which their fathers worshipped ; and whilst they have been dwelling in their ceiled houses, that house of the Lord has lain waste. But, God be praised, the moral wilderness is now to be reclaimed. The ruins of the former house shall indeed remain, to tell us of the frailty of earthly things ; but, within its precincts, is about to be raised up an habitation for the people of the Lord ; an habitation, in which we trust that many a faithful testimony shall be found of the enduring promises of that heavenly truth, which proclaims the consolations of eternity, amid the perishable things of time, and which teaches us to know, that, if this or any " earthly house of this tabernacle be

dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens¹;" an habitation, in which, Sabbath after Sabbath, and year after year, the praises and supplications of many a devout worshipper shall be offered up at the throne of grace, through the merits of Him who there liveth to make intercession for them; —in which the ignorant shall be taught, the weak sustained, the impenitent rebuked, and the earnest believer be enabled to grow strong in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Well and truly has this work been begun by those who are, in a peculiar sense, responsible for the spiritual welfare of our brethren who are to receive its benefits; because, from their body, are sent forth the stewards of God's mysteries, whose office it is to minister among them². And if, in former years, I have been permitted to occupy a place, however humble, in that Society; if then I learned the value of those Christian principles which animated the hearts of men whom I knew and loved; how powerfully are these associations now brought again to my remembrance, when I view them with reference to the undertaking, which is to be commenced this day, and witness the same integrity and zeal which

¹ 2 Cor. v. 1.

² The perpetual curacy of St. Botolph, (as has been stated in the preface,) is in the patronage of the Master and Fellows of Balliol College, Oxford.

stood foremost in the struggle of academic rivalry, now devoted to the service of that holy truth which can alone sanctify either the wisdom of the wise, or the might of the mighty; and directing, freely and effectively, to the salvation of immortal souls, every collateral and external instrument of power which is mercifully provided by the great Dispenser of all good.

I speak not this in the spirit of arrogant complacency, nor in the mere language of worldly eulogy, for I feel how true and just is the Apostle's question, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it¹?" "Not unto us, therefore, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name do we give the praise, for thy loving mercy and for thy truth's sake²." Yet, surely, it cannot be forbidden to gladden our own hearts, by seeing those, who are dear to us, so labouring in their vocation; and to wish them God speed. We have each of us our burdens to bear, our trials to encounter, our obligations to discharge. And to look through the intervals of a busy life upon the friends of our early manhood, thus running with patience the race that is set before them; to stimulate our own zeal, to sustain our own hope, by the prospect of their zeal slackening not, of their hope faltering not;—is not this

¹ 1 Cor. iv. 7.

² Ps. cxv. 1.

to open up again the refreshing streams of healthful and kind affection; to feel that there are ingredients of precious comfort even in the bread of carefulness and the cup of trembling, which the world compels us to taste; that there are gleams of sunshine which spread their loveliness upon the pathway even of a wearisome pilgrimage on earth; and that, even in days of rebuke and trouble, there are consolations to be found in our brethren, which, when we see, we, like the Apostle, may thank God, and take courage¹?

I know that I speak to those who, by their presence here this day, and by the aid which they have rendered to the work for which we have met, prove that they both understand and feel the truth of what I say. The generous support, which the laity and clergy of this Town and County have given, to the undertaking upon which we are about so solemnly to enter; the promptitude and kindness wherewith they have answered the call made upon them by its promoters, are evidences of their conviction that the call was just, and of their desire to strengthen the hands of those who made it.

And is it possible that there are any here who would now waver, or draw back from that holy work, or shrink from that burden which we are exhorting one another to bear,—any who would leave its supporters, without the means of bringing their arduous task to a speedy and successful ac-

¹ Acts xxviii. 15.

complishment? It cannot be, my brethren. It cannot be that, as Christian men, you can fail to discern, or discharge, the Christian duty which rests upon you. Let me implore you once more to advert to the ground upon which that duty is established, the blessings to which the faithful performance of it leads. The gigantic Philistine, who comes forth to defy the armies of the living God, can only be encountered now, as in the days of old, with the weapons which God has provided. The strong man of sin can only be subdued and shackled by the strength of one stronger than him. The moral leprosy, which taints the very life-blood of our hearts, and spreads infection through the whole frame, can only be cleansed by the healing operation of those means of grace which the great Physician of the soul supplies. Be not ye, therefore, slow to receive, and spread around you, the protection which the knowledge of His saving truth extends. Build ye up the waste places of the Lord, and gather within them the brethren for whom Christ died. Pray that the glorious Majesty of the Lord your God be upon you, that He may prosper the work of your hands¹, and make it the instrument and means of grace to yourselves and to your children for ever. To His glory be it dedicated; to your salvation may it minister. "Not grudgingly, then, nor of necessity²," but

¹ Ps. xc. 17.

² 2 Cor. ix. 7.

with a cheerful heart, render unto us your help. I ask it, in the name of Christ, for those who need the knowledge of His word ; and for the sake of Christ, and in His Spirit, I believe and trust that you will now, with heart and hand, respond to my appeal.

THE END.

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A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED IN AID OF THE

ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY,

ON SUNDAY, JULY XVII, MDCCCXXXVI.

AT ST. PETER'S, EATON SQUARE, PIMLICO.

BY THE REV.

JAMES S. M. ANDERSON, M.A.

CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO THE QUEEN,
AND PERPETUAL CURATE OF ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, BRIGHTON.

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TO
HIS MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY,
KING WILLIAM IV.,
PATRON
OF THE ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY,
THIS SERMON,
PREACHED IN ITS BEHALF,
IS DEDICATED
BY HIS MOST FAITHFUL AND DEVOTED
SUBJECT AND SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

AT A
MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE
OF THE
ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY,

HOLDEN AT
THE SOCIETY'S HOUSE,
2, CHATHAM-PLACE,

ON WEDNESDAY THE 20th DAY OF JULY, 1836,

BENJAMIN HAWES, Esq. F.S.A. TREASURER,

IN THE CHAIR ;

It was unanimously Resolved,

THAT the grateful thanks of the Committee be presented to the Rev. J. S. M. ANDERSON, M.A., for the able and excellent Sermon which he kindly preached at St. Peter's Church, Pimlico, on Sunday the 17th instant, in aid of the Funds of the Institution, and that he be requested to favour the Society with a copy for publication.

Resolved,

That, as a testimony of the esteem of this Committee, the Rev. J. S. M. ANDERSON be hereby elected a Director for Life of this Institution.

(Signed)

BENJAMIN HAWES,

Chairman.

BERKLEY WESTROPP,
Secretary.

METHODS OF TREATMENT

Recommended by the Royal Humane Society.

CAUTIONS.

1. Lose no time.—2. Avoid all rough usage.—3. Never hold the body up by the feet.—4. Nor roll the body on casks.—5. Nor rub the body with salt or spirits.—6. Nor inject tobacco-smoke, or infusions of tobacco.

RESTORATIVE MEANS.

IF APPARENTLY DROWNED,

Send quickly for Medical Assistance; but do not delay the following Means.

I. Convey the body carefully, with the head and shoulders supported in a raised position, to the nearest house.

II. Strip the body, and rub it dry; then wrap it in hot blankets, and place it in a warm bed in a warm chamber.

III. Wipe and cleanse the mouth and nostrils.

IV. In order to restore the natural warmth of the body:

1. Move a heated covered warming pan over the back and spine.
2. Put bladders or bottles of hot water, or heated bricks, to the pit of the stomach, the arm pits, between the thighs, and to the soles of the feet.
3. Foment the body with hot flannels; but, if possible,
4. Immerse the body in a warm bath as hot as the hand can bear without pain, as this is preferable to the other means for restoring warmth.
5. Rub the body briskly with the hand; do not, however, suspend the use of the other means at the same time.

V. In order to restore breathing, introduce the pipe of a common bellows (where the apparatus of the Society is not at hand) into one nostril, carefully closing the other and the mouth; at the same time drawing downwards, and pushing gently backwards the upper part of the windpipe, to allow a more free admission of air: blow the bellows gently, in order to inflate the lungs, till the breast be a little raised; the mouth and nostrils should then be set free, and a moderate pressure made with the hand upon the chest. Repeat this process till life appears.

VI. Electricity to be employed early by a Medical Assistant.

VII. Inject into the stomach, by means of an elastic tube and syringe, half a pint of warm brandy and water, or wine and water.

VIII. Apply sal volatile or hartshorn to the nostrils.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

On restoration to life, a tea-spoonful of warm water should be given; and then, if the power of swallowing be returned, small quantities of warm wine or weak brandy and water, warm; the patient should be kept in bed, and a disposition to sleep encouraged, except in cases of apoplexy, intoxication, and coup-de-soleil. Great care is requisite to maintain the restored vital action, and at the same time to prevent undue excitement.

The treatment recommended by the Society is to be persevered in for three or four hours. It is an erroneous opinion, that persons are irrecoverable because life does not soon make its appearance; and it is absurd to suppose that a body must not be meddled with or removed without the permission of a Coroner.

Every individual, of whatever rank or station, has a direct personal interest in the prosperity of this Institution; for who shall claim for himself or family an exemption from the dangers against which it provides? It is supported by Voluntary Contributions: One Guinea per annum constitutes an Annual Governor; Two Guineas an Annual Director; Ten Guineas' Donation a Life Governor; Twenty Guineas a Life Director. Those who are desirous of becoming Life or Annual Governors, or Directors, or of making any Voluntary Contributions, are requested to transmit their Names and Subscriptions to any of the following Bankers:—*Barnard & Co.* Cornhill; *Drummonds & Co.* Charing Cross; *Sir John Lubbock & Co.* Mansion House Street; *Weston, Young, & Bostock*, Borough Bank; *Benjamin Hawes, Esq.* 36, Brunswick Square, Treasurer; or, *Mr. Westropp*, Secretary, at the *Society's House*, 2, Chatham Place, Blackfriars, to which all Communications are to be addressed, and where the Methods of Treatment recommended by the Society may be obtained, gratis.

A

S E R M O N,

§c.

MATT. XXV. 13.

Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour
wherein the Son of Man cometh.

THE admonition here given by our Blessed Lord, is the practical application which He Himself has thought fit to make of the Parable of the Ten Virgins which immediately precedes it: a Parable which it were needless, I trust, to repeat in detail upon the present occasion, since the images employed therein cannot fail to be familiar to the mind of every rightly-instructed Christian. They must have excited the imagination, and been impressed upon the memory, even in the days of childhood; and the enlarged experience and intellect of matured manhood can find none that speak more forcibly to the hopes and fears of our common nature, none that more solemnly depict the obligation laid upon us all,—the obligation, mighty as it is irreversible,—to be prepared to meet the Almighty God in judgment.

This is the broad and prominent lesson of righteousness to be learnt from the Parable in question ; and to this end all the minuter incidents recorded in it are subordinate. I know that to many commentators, each one of those minuter incidents has appeared pregnant with mysterious and important meaning, and that they have essayed to give unto each one of them its precise and proper interpretation. But, however ingenious these interpretations frequently are, and however correct they sometimes appear to be (and correct they certainly cannot all be, since in many instances the utmost diversity and contradiction are found to exist between them), I am persuaded that the rules of sound Scriptural interpretation neither authorize nor require such elaborate and subtle adaptation of every circumstantial resemblance in the Parable to its exact parallel in our own day. For although the general proposition be undeniably just, that ‘ the more exactly the mystical exposition can be made to accord with the literal, the more perfect the Parable will appear to be ;’ and although the observation be no less just, that ‘ in these Parables, which our Lord himself interpreted to his disciples, few, if any, of the circumstantial points are unapplied’,

¹ See Bishop Van Mildert’s Bampton Lectures, S. vii. p. 197. It will be found in the context of the Sermon, from which the above extract is made, that its excellent author has adduced the very Parable which forms the subject of the present discourse, as an illustration of the principle he lays down : ‘ the main design of which (he says) is to show the necessity of vigi-

yet great care and judgment are requisite, lest in our endeavour to trace out the likeness of the minutest figures of the picture, we forget the character of those that are more prominent, whose aspect is not to be mistaken, and whose relation to ourselves is as permanent as it is true.

The grand characteristic lesson, therefore, to be learnt from the present Parable,—a lesson explicitly stated in the precept which the text contains, whose needfulness is enforced and heightened by all the subordinate images employed, and which we consequently should not seek to encumber and perplex by any over-curious refinements of our own device,—is that of watchfulness—the watchfulness of the disciples of Christ, waiting for the coming of Christ. For what is the coming of the Bridegroom represented in the present passage, but an emblem of His coming, who is the Spouse of the Church, the Redeemer and Judge of mankind? And what is the character of the Virgins, who are described as going forth to meet the Bridegroom; what their hope, their office, or their means of discharging it, but emblems, no less appropriate and true, of the privileges, the duties, the responsibilities of the people of God,—of those who are the children, the companions, the ornaments of the Church;

lance and circumspection in preparing for our entrance into eternal life,' whilst 'the mystical signification of the lamps, and the oil, and other adventitious circumstances, as it is less evident so is it comparatively unimportant; these being rather incidental to the narrative than essential to its purpose.'

whose office is to attend on Christ, to glorify the name of Christ, to long for the appearing of Christ, to preserve and hold up on high, in all its purity, the light of that blessed hope which Christ hath given, and so to "rejoice in the day of Christ, that they have not run in vain neither laboured in vain" ¹

And many there are among those who profess to be made partakers of this hope, and to long for this appearing, whose careless or hypocritical profession will be as fatal to their peace, as was the conduct of "the foolish virgins, who took no oil in their vessels with their lamps." I speak not of the open unbeliever or hardened mocker, for the case of such an one can hardly be brought within the scope of the present parable. I speak of those who say that they believe in a world to come, in Christ who died to save them, in Christ who shall come to judge them, who have the lamp of Christian profession in their hands, who lift it high, and make their boast of it, but yet have no oil in their vessels, *i. e.* no store of holy affections, no lively faith, no purifying hope, no patient charity, no fixed and settled resolution which God's grace is able, and ever ready to give unto them that ask it faithfully, and by the strength of which alone they can be upheld, amid the services and trials of this frail estate.

Wise indeed are they who, in the midst of such dangers and temptations, "covet earnestly the best gifts ²;" who seek aid and strength from Him "that

¹ Phil. ii. 16.

² 1 Cor. xii. 31.

giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not ¹," and who (in the figurative language of the parable before us) take "oil in their vessels with their lamps." Their hearts are the vessels thus furnished: the source from which that holy sustenance is derived, is no other than the inexhaustible Fountain of light and love, of whose fulness all true believers have received; and the public and private means of grace, are the channels through which that heavenly grace is ordained to pass, and feed with its constant nourishment the lamp of their Christian life.

But we are told, that "while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept"; that even those who were wise and provident, and had oil in their vessels with their lamps, were borne down by weakness, and thought that He, whom they looked for, had delayed His coming. It was even so. "They all slumbered and slept." See here how truly this Parable is descriptive of the Christian world: descriptive even of those who know and feel in whom they have believed, who confess themselves to be strangers and pilgrims upon earth, and whose hope is lifted up towards that better and enduring inheritance, from whence also they look for their Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ.

Even among them may slumberers be found; for their willing spirit is encumbered by the weakness of its earthly tabernacle. Yes, my brethren, "in many things we offend all ²." Notwithstanding the

¹ James i. 5.

² James iii. 2.

purity and eternal blessing of the hope that is set before us, the glories of the world dazzle, and the shadows of the world darken our mental vision. The objects which surround us here are seen ; those to which we aspire are not seen. At every step some danger is to be encountered, some snare to be avoided, some obstacle to be surmounted ; and hence being made to feel the weariness of the way,—the wisest and the best of us are tempted to slumber and to sleep. Our lamps may still burn, and the vessels may still be near to feed and nourish them ; but the hands which sustained them wax feeble, and fold themselves to slumber. Yea, the very tranquillity that sometimes is our portion, tempts us to sleep on and take our rest. It may be the season of repose ; the passions of angry men may be at rest ; and the voice of turbulence or slander may be hushed ; but in the calmest and stillest hour of man's existence there is danger, and even at midnight may the cry be heard, " Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him."

They best can feel the startling terror of such a summons, upon whom some sudden and heavy blow has fallen ; and who, in the full intensity of their anguish, have entreated the Lord to put away the cup of trembling from their lips, and in his wrath to remember mercy. But sure I am that no imagination can picture to itself, and no tongue express the utter desolation of the soul which shall be unprepared to meet that sum-

mons. The Parable before us indeed gives some description of it, when it represents the foolish virgins awaking in fear, asking in vain for their companions' help, seeking in vain for assistance from without, at length assailing the door with the piteous cry, "Lord, Lord, open unto us," and receiving that dreadful answer, "I know ye not:" but even this, simple and touching as it is, does not embody, in all its overwhelming strength, the reality of that dreadful issue. Even the consternation which the Beloved Disciple beholds in the Apocalyptic vision, when "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the earth, and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb¹," even that is not more terrible than the alarm which our own souls shall feel, if we should be summoned to an account which it is not in our power to render; if we should be called to go forth and meet him that cometh in the glory of the judgment, and our lamps of faith, of obedience, of love be going out². "It will be too late to knock when the door shall be shut; too late to cry for mercy, when it is time for justice.

¹ Rev. vi. 15.

² V. 8. "Give us of your oil; for our lamps *are gone out*;" or, as the marginal reading expresses it, *are going out*:—a translation more obviously in accordance with the original, αἱ λαμπάδες ἡμῶν σβέννυνται.

Therefore, brethren, take we heed betimes while the day of salvation lasteth ; for the night cometh when no man can work¹." This, remember, is the warning voice of our Church in one portion of her public service ; in this, as in every other instance, she follows the sure guidance of that Redeemer upon whose Name she rests, and by whose Spirit she is sanctified ; and in this most emphatically she echoes the admonition of the text, " Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

And truly, the blessedness which awaited the wise virgins, furnishes us with another and a most constraining motive to obey this warning voice. They had indeed been slumbering ; but the strength and energy of their spiritual life was not lost within them. They not only heard the Bridegroom's voice ; but, even in the darkness of midnight, they could obey it ; for their lamps were burning ; the vessels were at hand to maintain the bright and steady lustre of the flame ; they were ready to enter in with him to the marriage. The word of God, therefore, speaks to us in the language of compassion as well as of justice ; it invites us no less powerfully unto holiness by its consoling promises, than deters us from sin by the prospect of its fearful issue. And we, observe, are even now within the hearing of the Divine commandment, and of those means of grace by which strength

¹ Communion Service.

is given us to obey it. Before us, as before the Israelites of old, are set life and death, blessing and cursing. Why then presume to trifle with such a solemn alternative? Why halt or linger between two opinions? Why hazard the salvation of immortal souls, by neglecting the means of grace extended to us, by refusing to know in this our day the things that belong to our everlasting peace? Surely we all have need of the help that is promised to the prayer of faith; and we know that in this life only can that prayer be offered up, and that help obtained. We cannot tell how suddenly our life may terminate, nor how in an instant the power of offering up our prayers may cease, and the heart that feels them, and the tongue that utters them, lie mouldering in the grave. But this we know, that, in acknowledgment of this truth, we have even this Sabbath day poured out our supplications at the footstool of grace; and, in the language of our solemn Litany, have entreated the Good Lord "to deliver us from battle, and murder, and sudden death."

This has been the language of our lips. God grant that it may have been also the unfeigned language of our hearts! But let us reason together for one moment upon the meaning of this petition; for I believe that it is sometimes mistaken. Shall it be thought that we here pray against an instantaneous death? Not so, my brethren. The issues of life and death are in the hand of Him that made us; and it is not for ourselves to define the mode

in which this frail tabernacle shall be dissolved, nor to make it the subject of our prayer to God. The result, in one sense, is the same; whatever may be the mode of the dissolution. Whether in an instant the lamp of life shall be extinguished within us, whilst the energies of soul and body are yet fresh and buoyant, or whether those "years shall draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;" when "the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened;" when "all the daughters of music shall be brought low," and "desire" itself "shall fail;"—in either case shall "the silver cord be loosed, and the golden bowl broken, and the pitcher broken at the fountain, and the wheel broken at the cistern;" in either case "shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it¹." It is not, therefore, from an *instantaneous* death, but from death for which we are *unprepared*, that we pray to be delivered. That it is which makes the suddenness of death terrible; and to be saved from that terror, is surely a fit subject of petition from the frail children of earth to their Father which is in heaven.

And, remember, that, in determining the character of such a death, our judgment is not to be regulated merely by the consideration of external circumstances alone. The soldier may fall in the high places of the field: and his strength and hope

¹ Eccles. xii. 1—7.

and courage perish in a moment, amid the “confused noise, and garments rolled in blood¹,” which mark every battle of the warrior; yet if, in the spirit of the centurion on Calvary, he has stood at the foot of the cross of Christ, and recognized, in the unutterable sorrows of Him who hung there, the Son of God, the Saviour of the World, the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Prince of Peace; if the Word of that Redeemer has been his guide, and the Spirit of that Redeemer his comforter; if he has taken unto himself the whole armour of God, and watched thereunto with all perseverance², not being ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, but manfully fighting under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil³; the death of such a man,—however sudden may have been the blow which struck him to the dust,—is not one which finds him unprepared. However swiftly the sword of the combatant, or the winged messenger of destruction, may have done their work, the soul of the faithful is unharmed:—he sleeps in Jesus.

And so, too, the mariner, when he traverses the wide ocean. Though the heavens be darkened, and the thunders roll, and the waves be mighty and rage horribly; though the pride and beauty of the vessel be overwhelmed, and sink “as lead in the mighty waters⁴,” yet, if his heart has turned habitually and faithfully towards the haven of his

¹ Is. ix. 5.

² Ephes. vi. 11—18.

³ Baptismal service.

⁴ Exod. xv. 10.

rest, and his hope been fixed on the sure mercies of that Saviour who alone can guide him thither, who shall say that the suddenness of death finds him unprepared, or that, amid the fiercest howling of the storm, the arms of the Everlasting are not his refuge? Precisely the same truth holds good in all similar cases of sudden extinction of life. Be it the murderer's violence, or consuming plague, or devouring fire, or the lightning's flash, or the trembling earthquake, or any other of the varied accidents of 'flood and field,' they who have fallen suddenly by any of these may have set their houses in order, their loins may have been girded, their lights burning, and so to them (however quick or sharp may have been the pang of mortal agony), to them will be vouchsafed the blessedness that is appointed for those faithful servants whom "the Lord, when he cometh, shall find so watching¹."

Mark, now, the contrast. If it be possible for death to come with swiftness, yet not with destructive suddenness, upon minds that are prepared to meet it: it is no less possible for it to draw near with slow and lingering steps to others who dwell at ease in Zion, and yet, in the end, to come suddenly and fatally upon them, because, even in the end, they are found unprepared to meet it. Year after year has passed quietly and gradually away: the morning of existence has arisen brightly upon

¹ Luke xii. 37.

the sight; the noontide of maturer years has succeeded; the shadows of life's evening have begun to lengthen and foreshow the coming darkness of the grave, and yet the lamp of Christian truth and hope, which ought to have burned brightly to the last, is going out; for there is no store of devout affections to feed and nourish it. It falls from the impotency of his expiring grasp, who professed to hold it. The awful cry may ring in the ears, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh!" and the heart may strive to answer, "Lord, Lord, open to me;" but what hope is there of retrieving the means of grace that have been lost? What power is there of opening the door of mercy that is closed? Verily, the death of such an one is sudden. He hath sown to the wind, and reaped the whirlwind. The day of grace is closed. The light of hope is extinguished. The terrors of retribution are begun. Herein is realized the confusion of the unprofitable servant who was cast into outer darkness,—the desolation of the proud and careless men who refused to come to the feast prepared for them,—the rejection of the foolish virgins who had taken no oil in their vessels with their lamps.

Assuredly, the possibility of so fearful an issue is enough to make the loftiest and the strongest among us bow down and tremble. Our self-love would fain turn away our thoughts from contemplating it; and yet this unwillingness, this refusal to regard it will not do away its existence. How

often does the sinner fall suddenly in his sins ! The headstrong and youthful spirit that has spurned control, and rushed greedily into the chambers of death,—the bold blasphemer that has been struck whilst curses have trembled upon his lips,—the drunkard that has never waked from the sleep of drunkenness,—the adulterer that has poured out his life-blood on the field of combat, as the wages of his lust,—the frantic gamester that has made his beggared wife a widow, and his children fatherless ;—these, and many more than these, which may be added to the frightful catalogue of crime, are awful testimonies of the fact that “evil shall hunt the wicked person to overthrow him¹,” that the sentence recorded against an “evil work,” is often “executed speedily².” These show how bitter are the fruits of sin ; how sharp is the sting of death which thus suddenly pierces the heart of the impenitent. These humble our spirits : these give energy to our prayers : yea from such a sin, and from such an end, “from sudden death, good Lord deliver us.”

And shall we not, thus praying, be led further on to act ? If we could in any way be enabled to realize this petition, to avert this sudden blow, and bring back life to the senseless body, would we not do it ? If, in any single instance, we could awaken the pulse that had ceased to beat, or give to the glazed eye its wonted brightness, and to the rigid

¹ Psalm cx. 11.

² Eccles. viii. 11.

limbs their former energy, would not our hearts be thankful, and our tongues give praise unto the Lord? It would not merely be the instinctive impulse which would urge us, quicker than thought, to wipe away the tears from those that mourn, and restore to their arms the husband, the child, the brother, or the friend for whom they wept: but the hope would also animate us, that yet a further period may be granted for God's grace to reach and subdue the heart which aforetime had been slow to receive it, that the spark of Christian truth, which had lain dormant within the breast, may yet be kindled into warmth, and be like "the path of the just," which "shineth more and more unto the perfect day¹." This would be, indeed, a Christian work, a Christian triumph. Say not that it is a vain and visionary prospect; a presumptuous hope which attempts to exercise the attributes of Almighty God. For whatsoever means He hath placed within the reach of man, it is not presumptuous for man to exercise: and if the subject of that prayer, to which I have just now referred, be (as I have endeavoured to show) lawful, the attainment of it, as far as in us lies, is lawful also. And for the possibility of attaining it, in many cases, I need offer no other proof than the operations of that admirable Society for whose interests I plead this day. For upwards of sixty-one years have the managers of this Institution carried on their labour of love with unwearied

¹ Prov. iv. 18.

zeal, with undiminished energy. They have outlived the ridicule of the scorner and the contempt of the incredulous. They have reduced the vague experiments of former days to simple and practicable rules. They have supplied the instruments of human science with new faculties. They have given a well grounded hope to many who, but for their aid, might have been abandoned to despair. They can point to the names of thousands, (I speak deliberately and cautiously, I use no exaggerated language,) they can point to the names of thousands who have been saved by their hands : some whose very birth seemed to be the prelude of the grave,—some, whose spirits have failed within them when pursuing their perilous labours amid the noxious damps and vapours of the mine,—some, that have sunk beneath the very waters into which they had plunged, with all the happy fearlessness of youth,—some that have fallen amid the shivering fragments of the winter's ice,—some that have rushed, with the desperate spirit of the suicide, into that stream which they have impiously thought would be a welcome grave,—some that have been cast helpless from the shipwreck on the rocks and shores of our sea-girt land,—in all and each of these cases, has the vigilance of this Society been prompt to rescue those that were ready to perish ; yea, those whom our fathers, a century ago, would have looked upon as irrevocably passed away, and for whom they would have gone as mourners about the streets.

I speak now in the presence of some who, from

their personal experience, can bear testimony to the truth of what I say. I speak to all who have the means of verifying this, and much more than this ; and, if we calmly contemplate the result of these mighty labours, if we view it in connexion with that solemn subject to which I have already directed your attention, and feel it to be an instrument, a precious and successful instrument to avert the most dreadful of all woes, the suddenness of death to those who are not prepared to meet it, what object can there be conceived of more deep and solemn interest ?

You need not be told, that the miseries, which it is the object of this Society to alleviate, and which it so successfully does alleviate, are miseries from which none of us are exempt in our own persons, or in the persons of those dear to us. Be your station what it may, your means of protection, your hopes of prosperity as strong and well grounded as the most painful precaution, the most watchful affection can desire, yet who can tell what a day, what an hour, may bring forth : in how brief a moment the light may be exchanged for darkness, and hope for terror, and the accents of cheerfulness and joy for anguish and bitter weeping ? We have heard, in this morning's service, of the sorrows of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah ; how she watched over the bodies of her slaughtered sons, and spreading the sackcloth for her upon the rock, "suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the

beasts of the field by night¹." And who knoweth how soon the sorrows of that Jewish mother may come home to any here, yea, to those who can now see, and feel, and clasp to their bosoms the children dear to them? Let but a few hours pass away, and the messenger of heavy tidings may come to their own dwellings; telling them not indeed of the child that has been slaughtered by the sword of the avenger, but of the child whom the deep waters have carried to the chambers of death. And if that story of woe shall reach the ear of the distracted mother, will not the intensity of her affection,—such affection as that which stirred the soul of Rizpah on the hill of Gibeon,—bring her with hurried steps to watch over the lifeless body of her son, and keep off, if it were possible, the destroyer from it. Surely her sight will fail her for very trouble at such a moment; and, as she stretcheth forth her hands unto the Lord, she may ask, in the very words of the Psalmist, which have this day fallen from our lips, "Dost thou show wonders among the dead: or shall the dead rise up again, and praise thee?" The question has been answered: answered not only in the glorious triumph of that blessed Redeemer, who hath taken from death its sting, and from the grave its victory,—answered not only in the promise of life and immortality which His Gos-

¹ 2 Sam xxi. 10. This chapter is the first Lesson appointed for the seventh Sunday after Trinity, on which day this Sermon was preached.

² Ps. lxxxviii. 10.

pel hath brought to light, and by virtue of which the mourner is commanded not to sorrow as without hope for them that sleep in Jesus ; but answered even here ; even in the life that now is : for even amid the perils of our earthly pilgrimage it hath pleased God to show wonders among the dead, by the hands of those whom he hath made the instruments of His mercy : yea the dead, those, *i. e.* whom the world would have accounted dead, and who, but for the help so afforded, would indeed have been dead. They have risen up again, and praised thee O Lord.

I stop not now to delineate the feelings of those who have been so wonderfully rescued from the grave. The thoughts of their hearts must be too big for utterance ; and it is not for a stranger to intermeddle with the thankful, the holy joy which, I trust, is lifting up their affections to their God and Saviour. And yet I cannot forbear adverting, for one moment, to a case which only yesterday was brought under my notice : the case of a man who, but a few weeks since, was himself snatched from the jaws of death, and now intercedes with this Society to bestow, upon the instrument of his preservation, such a testimonial of their sense of the service rendered to him as the rules of the Institution may permit. He is an artizan, pursuing the labours of his humble calling, in this vast metropolis. His letter, which I have seen, is not set off with any of the adornments of polished eloquence ; but breathes the simple unaffected language of native

truth. He speaks of his having journeyed to a distance from home ; and, whilst he was bathing in the river, being carried off by the strong current of the stream. He made many attempts to attract the notice of some persons whom he had observed bathing near him, but a projection of the bank concealed him from their view. His limbs soon became powerless, and he gave himself up for lost. ‘Then,’ he says, ‘the thought of parents, home, and sisters, came into my heart.’ How natural, and how touching was this thought ! And how sore must have been the agony of those to whom his last affections thus turned, if the blow which threatened to overwhelm him had fallen : and he, by whose honest industry they had been enabled to live and to be comforted, had passed away from them, and been no more seen. But they have been spared that agony ; the parents, home, and sisters whom he loved, have again received, and still retain him for their own : and the first, the most fervent desire of his heart now, is that of thankfulness to his Heavenly Father who hath saved him, and to those earthly instruments of His mercy with whom he associates the memory of his present deliverance¹.

I have adverted to this case, my brethren, not because it surpasses, or is even equal, in circum-

¹ I have not thought it right to publish the names of the parties concerned, because I have not their authority for doing so : but all particulars may be ascertained at the Society’s Office. The place at which the event occurred was near Windsor.

stances of deep and affecting interest, to many which the records of this Institution can furnish ; but simply because from the recentness of its occurrence, and the distinctness with which it is now impressed on my mind, it seems to stand out in clear and prominent relief from the surrounding multitude. Whatsoever is individual and personal arrests our attention far more forcibly than crowds of vague generalities : and if we can first realize to ourselves the separate circumstances of any single instance like the present, and be enabled to examine and verify it in all its bearings, then, and not till then may we hope to embody in our imagination some idea of the aggregate of good that is achieved by the multiplied, consistent, and persevering efforts of a Society like that for which I now plead : a Society, which recognizes no other purpose than that of extending succour to those who hover on the confines of the grave, which uses no other means than those which the tenderest ministrations of human science and benevolence have provided, and seeks no other glory but His, by whom alone the instruments of human science or benevolence are blessed, and whose wise and warning Providence is to be learnt in every issue of life or death. It is a Society too which knows no distinction of rank, or country, or sex, or age. On all men the common destinies of frail mortality are laid ; and to all men, as far as the ability of doing so exists, the hand of instant deliverance is held

out. Read but the Reports which this Society has published of its proceedings, and you will there find evidence not only of the provision which it has made for prompt and effectual relief along the banks of the rivers which intersect or adjoin the metropolis, and on which, whether in pursuit of business or of pleasure, the lives of so many of our fellow-countrymen, are placed in daily jeopardy,—not only (as my own experience enables me to testify ¹) is similar provision made in many parts of our coast,—but also of the exertions which, during the past year, it has made to secure aid to those who are wrecked upon the shores of other countries as well as upon our own. In consequence of the earnest remonstrance and entreaties of this Society, a correspondence has been carried on between the authorities of our own Government and that of the French, for the purpose of securing, on both sides of the Channel, an uniform plan of operation with reference to this very object: a plan whereby the recurrence of those unhappy events, to which the memory of most who now hear me must bear witness, may be prevented, and the life of many a poor voyager be saved from those fatal mistakes

¹ For some years past the Society have gratuitously supplied one of the most convenient stations in the town of Brighton with all the apparatus that is required in cases of sudden emergency. Many instances have occurred to show the value of such assistance; and I trust, no long time will elapse, before an Auxiliary Committee be formed in Brighton to extend its benefits.

which have arisen from the fiscal and sanatory regulations of other countries, and served to make the miseries of shipwreck more dark and terrible ¹.

Turn then which way soever you will, you find that loud and imperious calls are made for the aid of this Society, and that it has obeyed those calls, has extended that aid, to the furthest limit of its means. If in some cases its efforts have proved abortive, blame not its supporters. They cannot do more than the means in their hands allow. The help which they profess to give, remember, is useless, unless it be given promptly. The work which they have to accomplish, is one whose success depends mainly upon its immediate commencement, upon its judicious and patient continuance. It is a question of moments. Each moment of delay or injudicious effort, impairs the efficacy of the means applied for recovery. It diminishes the hopes, and discourages the exertions of those who apply the means. Unless, therefore, you multiply the facilities of prompt and timely succour, it is impossible to multiply the cases of successful operation. With an income barely sufficient for the wants of the metropolis alone ²,—without any assistance from the

¹ In the Report of the Society for the year 1836, the correspondence here referred to between the Committee, and the Foreign Office and the French Marine Department is recorded, together with the circumstances which led the Humane Society to take this course.

² The average income is about £2,500 a year; and the fact that not less than 200,000 persons are computed annually to

legislature,—dependent only for its human aid upon the spontaneous bounty of individuals,—surrounded on every side by the calls of other institutions more recent, it may be, in their origin, but not more useful in their operation, nor more valuable in the results which they accomplish,—how is it possible for this Society to furnish in all cases and at all times the help that is demanded? or how can it be just to blame it for this inability? ‘If the public demand more from us (say its managers, and they say truly) the public must contribute more.’

I ask you then for the means of extending this aid; and I ask it confidently. Could you but witness those scenes in which this Society finds its sphere of duty, I know what the result would be. Every feeling of your hearts would kindle into warmth and energy; and the voice would cry aloud for help, and the feet would run swiftly to bring it, and the hands would be stretched out eagerly to apply it. This would be the instinctive impulse of your nature, if, as your footsteps turned away from this house of prayer, you were to behold one ready to sink in the deep waters. And shall your consciousness of danger be less ardent because you see it not, or your desire to avert it less eager, because you yourselves bear no part in it? O my brethren,

bathe in the Serpentine River, besides the crowds of skaters in the winter season, together with the numerous accidents occurring daily in the river Thames, is enough to show the unceasing calls for the help of this Society made by the metropolis and its vicinity.

say not so. You know the reality of the dangers whereof I speak ; and if their nearness to yourselves be not known, let such uncertainty rather stimulate you to be watchful than careless. It is an uncertainty which our Lord has urged in the text as a motive to watch for His coming ; and who shall presume to disregard it ? You have besought the Lord this day to have mercy upon you. Your prayer has been that of the Psalmist—" O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me ; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine hand-maid ¹." With this entreaty upon your lips, will you forget it in your lives ? Will you not give to others the strength which you implore for yourselves, and extend to their servants and sons the safety which you pray may be your own ? I will not cast such reproach upon your Christian hope and your Christian calling, as to deem that such mockery of either is possible among you. No, my brethren, " the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus ² " is too great ; the ground on which it is established too strong ; the promises by which it is illustrated too glorious, to suffer any who walk in the brightness of that salvation to halt, or linger, or draw back in the work of mercy to which I now invite you. I leave it to prosper in your hands. May the God of truth and mercy give you strength to uphold and carry it onward to a successful issue, for Jesus Christ's sake !

¹ Psalm lxxxvi. 16.

² Phil. iii. 14.

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A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT THE

CONSECRATION OF TRINITY CHAPEL,

DANE HILL,

IN THE PARISH OF FLETCHING, SUSSEX,

ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1836.

BY THE REV.

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A

S E R M O N,

§c.

ROM. x. 14 and part of 15.

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?

THE words of the Apostle, in this passage of Scripture, afford an admirable instance of the force and energy of that figure of speech which is oftentimes conveyed, not only in ordinary conversation, but in writings of the highest order of excellence, under the form of interrogation. It is a form which possesses the force and energy ascribed to it, simply because it is the spontaneous language of impassioned feeling; that to which men instinctively have recourse, whensoever they are seeking to follow out some train of close and earnest reasoning, or to establish some matter of fact, of the correctness

of which they are persuaded. It implies, indeed, a direct assertion of the confidence felt in the truth of that concerning which the question is asked, by requiring from him to whom it is addressed an immediate assent to its reality, or by challenging him to refute, if he can, its validity and application. I stop not to confirm the truth of these remarks, by referring to any of the numerous instances of the interrogatory form of expression with which the minds of most of us must be familiar; but would merely observe, that no where do we meet with more striking examples of its energy and weight in argument than in the Volume of Inspiration. The history of the Law, the songs of the inspired Psalmist, the visions of the Prophets who succeeded him,—yea, the very teaching of our blessed Lord himself, each and all of these abound with apposite examples of this form of reasoning. The great Apostle of the Gentiles therefore does but increase their number and their strength, when, in the present passage of his Epistle to the Romans, he asks, “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?”

The Apostle is here arguing the necessity of preaching the Gospel to every creature, whether

Jew or Gentile. He had already stated, in the beginning of the chapter, the difference between "the righteousness which is of the law," and "the righteousness which is of faith;" and had explicitly set forth the grand fundamental truth, that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth¹." And, as the direct consequence of the truth so emphatically proclaimed, "the word of faith" which the Apostle preached, was this, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved²." With respect to the persons who should be saved through this belief, he asserts further, that "there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him³;" and as none who went "about to establish their own righteousness" could by such means attain salvation, so they who "submitted themselves to the righteousness of God," and drew near unto the throne of grace, trusting in the merits of Him who there ever lived to make intercession for them, should in no wise be cast out. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord," (the Prophet had said aforetime, and the Apostle repeats it now,) "whosoever shall call on

¹ Rom. x. 4—6.

² Ib. verse 9.

³ Ib. verse 12.

the name of the Lord, shall be saved¹." And since the calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus could only be done, truly and sincerely, by those who believed on Him,—since salvation was to be obtained in that way, and that way alone,—then it followed that no just grounds could be found for the reproach which the Jews strove to cast upon the Apostle, or upon others, who, like him, were sent to proclaim those glad tidings to the Gentile world. For, "how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" The reasoning contained in these words, it will be seen, is so clear from the very form of interrogation which it assumes, and the appeal, the direct and personal appeal, which it makes to the hearts and affections of all that hear it, so irresistible, that we should only weaken its power, were we to attempt to elucidate it. Every one that hears the questions must understand them, and every one that understands them must acknowledge their truth and urgency.

Mark now the plain and necessary consequence of this acknowledgment. If they only can be

¹ Rom. x. 13, compare Joel ii. 32.

saved who call upon the name of the Lord,—if that calling implies believing, and that believing cometh by hearing, and that hearing is the effect of preaching, and that preaching the work of men who are expressly sent to preach, does it not follow that, if salvation is still to be attained by the same prayer of faith, there must still be appointed ministers to preach the same word of faith? Their duty, remember, their holy and needful duty, is consecrated by the personal ministry of our great High Priest Himself, and sanctioned by His express command. It was even thus that He ordained the twelve to preach the kingdom of God, whilst He was upon earth, and thus, when He was about to ascend into heaven, that He commanded them, “Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world¹.” As His Father had sent Him, even so sent He them,² with the word and spirit of His power. Thus likewise the successors of the first Apostles carried on the ministry of reconciliation, ordaining elders in every church, and commending them to the Lord on whom they believed.³

Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. ² John xx. 21. ³ Acts xiv. 23.

The things which they had "heard of among many witnesses, the same" were they commanded to "commit to faithful men who should be able to teach others also¹." All these and numerous other passages which might be adduced, are, every one of them, commentaries upon the language of St. Paul in the text, and prove the necessity that exists of establishing some uniform and consistent system of religious instruction, by means of which the message of God's truth and mercy may pass through the length and breadth of the land, and be brought home to the hearts of the people.

The next question, then, which presents itself for our consideration is, how is this necessity to be supplied, this work to be accomplished? Shall it be thought enough to entrust it to the spontaneous efforts of those to whom it is presented, to gather up its benefits as they best can? And shall we expect that, just in the same manner as the supply is found to meet the demand, in matters of general commerce, so the amount of religious instruction shall always be ready to supply the demand that is made for it? I think such a supposition fallacious, because the ground on which it rests is not sound. It assumes that a demand will be spontaneously made for religious instruction, whereas the very

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 2.

reverse is the fact. It assumes that moral and spiritual wants will be as quickly acknowledged by the people as physical and temporal wants, and that the exertion to relieve them will be equally strong in both cases. But who that observes the workings of human nature can allow this to be the case? The naked, and the hungry, and the sick, cry with earnest importunity for help; and why? because they feel their privations to be actual and pressing misery. But does the ignorant and hardened sinner feel his ignorance or his sins to be misery? We know that he does not; nay, we know that his very ignorance and hardness of heart prevent him from doing this. They are as a veil spread over the eyes of his understanding, which hinders him from seeing what manner of man he is. Earthly occupations speak not of religion, nor kindle one spark of reverence and godly love¹. "Man knoweth not the price thereof, neither is it found in the land

¹ It is needless to observe that the argument here adverted to, has already been made familiar to the mind of the general reader, by the writings of Dr. Chalmers, and others, upon the same subject. The validity and importance of the argument are most clearly demonstrated in a pamphlet recently published by Mr. Collins, of Glasgow, entitled "Statistics of the Church accommodation of Glasgow, &c. and addressed to the Royal Commissioners appointed to enquire into the means of religious instruction, &c. in Scotland." The Appendix is most valuable, and well deserves the prompt and earnest consideration of all Christian citizens.

of the living. The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof¹." It must be given, therefore, by Him who knoweth what things we have need of before we ask Him. The hearts of His creatures must be assailed by constant aggressions from without. The strong man of sin, who holds his dominion undisturbed within them, must be conquered, and bound, and cast out, by One stronger than himself. The heedless and hardened mocker must be taught to listen to the voice which speaketh "in righteousness, mighty to save." He may love the slumber of his soul to be deep and undisturbed. Like Ahab, who had departed from the service of the living God, he may shrink from the righteous rebuke of Micaiah, and hate him because he doth not prophesy good concerning him, but evil²,—and yet, unwelcome though he be, the messenger of truth must do his work; in the ears of the careless and impenitent he must utter aloud the summons, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light³." For "how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they

¹ Job xxviii. 13, 14, 15. ² 1 Kings xxii. 8. ³ Eph. v. 14.

hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent ?”

But whilst the unwillingness of the natural man to ask for the supply of spiritual truth is granted, and whilst, as a further consequence of that admission, it is granted yet again, that this supply must be furnished from without, it may be thought, and, in fact, it is thought, and asserted, broadly and pertinaciously, in the present day, that the ministration of this supply may safely be left to the efforts of private zeal: that, wheresoever occasion may call for the services of faithful ministers, there God will surely raise them up, and employ them as the instruments of His Providence for the benefit of His people: and that, consequently, there is no need either for the legislature to provide, or for the country to support, what is called an Established Church. Now that the watchful Providence of the blessed God, who is the Founder, the Redeemer, the Sanctifier of His Church, is ever mindful of the promise which He hath given to uphold and to preserve it, we believe and we confess sincerely and thankfully. Nay more, if His Providence did not so maintain it, we believe that the efforts of man to do so, would be as vain and hopeless a task, as to give coherence to the unsubstantial phantom of a dream. But yet we believe as truly, that His Providence is

pleased to work by secondary causes, by the agency and instrumentality of His creatures; and that to neglect these aids, or not to choose and employ the best provided for us, would be an abuse of His grace, a provocation of His wrath. It would be nothing less than to incur the guilt, and yield to the influence of that very temptation which was addressed so fruitlessly to our Lord by Satan, and to cast ourselves headlong from the pinnacle whereon we stand, expecting that angels are to come and bear us up.

No doubt the efforts of individual zeal may frequently be the instruments of achieving much good, and we acknowledge with thankfulness that they have been so. Yea, even where they have been directed by men who unhappily dissent from the doctrines or discipline of our Church,—yet, when such men still hold the head which is Christ Jesus, and pursue their course with candour, and impartiality, and single-hearted devotedness, to the glory of God, we find nothing in the Church, of which we are ministers, to authorize or justify the language of contempt or crimination; but, in the spirit of Christian fellowship, we bear willing testimony to their labours, and wish them God speed. Be it that in our own, as in the days of St. Paul, there be some that “preach Christ even of envy

¹ Compare Ephes. iv. 15. and Col. ii. 19.

and strife, and some also of good will;”—“What then? (he asks) notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice ¹.” Even so, would we rejoice likewise; and, in rejoicing, seek that “nothing be done through strife or vain glory ².”

Looking, however, to the efforts in question, not so much with reference to the opinions which they convey, as to the evidence which the advocates of the voluntary system profess to derive from them, that they may safely be relied upon as sources of permanent assistance, and as consistent instruments of action, I must deny that they contain any such evidence. I grant that, in our towns and cities, where large masses of the people are collected together, the voluntary efforts of individuals may make mighty and successful efforts towards the propagation of the Divine word; because, in such places, there are never wanting the materials of excitement, or the means of indulging it. The close and frequent interchange of thought is there actively at work, and there are seldom wanting those aids which Christian love is eager to devote, faithfully and heartily, and which the union of the many, who live within its influence, assists in applying to the wants, whether spiritual or tempo-

¹ Phil. i. 15. 18.

² Phil. ii. 3.

ral, of the necessitous. And, even where holier principles may not be discerned in operation, there is still the collision of interest, the love of rivalry, and many other actuating causes, whose spring and origin indeed may often savour of earth and its affections, but whose results may notwithstanding be overruled for good. Yet, allowing all this, what ground have we to look for such results in the remote and sequestered districts of the country, where the operation of such feelings, however they may exist, is seldom developed by any of the stimulating forces exerted elsewhere; or, if developed, is rendered well nigh powerless, from the impossibility of acting with any combination of purpose; but where nevertheless the blessings of Christian faith and Christian holiness are as much needed, and as dearly prized, as in any of the crowded dwellings of busy and stirring multitudes?

A provision must be made, therefore, independent of all contingencies that may arise from the temporary impulse of private zeal, irrespective of all the changing and conflicting interests of local jealousy or of party feeling. And if it be the duty of the State to secure to every man his temporal rights and franchise, to save the weak from oppression, and to maintain the strong in his strength; and if, by virtue of such protection, the obedience and support of upright citizens be demanded in re-

turn ; then not less imperatively is it the duty of Christian States and Statesmen to secure, to uphold, and to increase the means which they possess of propagating Christian truth ; to watch and pray that the spirit of Christian obedience may pervade and render healthful the discordant elements which they attempt to regulate ; and not less is it the duty of Christian subjects to return their free, and generous, and cordial co-operation towards the attainment of that same purpose. That such assistance is urgently demanded, let the evils that compass us about bear testimony ; those evils which, whether manifested in the lusts of the sensualist, the curses of the blasphemer, the violence of the murderer, or the falsehood of the deceiver, cast shame upon a land professing Christianity, and which nothing but the operation of actual and earnest Christianity upon the heart can possibly restrain.

We repeat, without any fear of contradiction, the assertion that has been made so frequently by the wise and good, that, unless the education, which is now spread among the people, be based upon religious principles, unless it be accompanied with every facility to learn those truths which alone make men wise unto salvation, and to observe those ordinances which are the ministration of righteousness, through every changing scene of life's pilgrimage, it will produce no lasting benefit.

The systems of the self-called philanthropist may be ingenious, and the efforts to carry them into execution may be persevering ; yet, if they possess not the animating strength of Christianity, they can no more pour into the hearts of our people the spirit of patient order or of active obedience, than could the dry bones of the valley of vision put on the sinews and flesh of living men, and stand up upon their feet an exceeding great army. It was the Spirit of the Lord God, wafted from the four winds of heaven, that breathed life into those that were slain ¹ ; and it is only the working of the same Spirit now that can awaken our souls and bodies from the death of sin to the life of righteousness.

You see, therefore, the high and solemn interests involved in the ministry of those who are sent to preach that you might believe. You see, too, the vastness of the region in which we are called upon to labour. Peopled everywhere with immortal souls, and beset on every side with perils, it calls unceasingly for help. And that help must be supplied. The watchman of Israel must not slumber at his post ; he must sound an alarm in God's holy mountain ; and bid the hearts of his people join, as the heart of one man, in watchfulness and prayer unto the Lord. In some fixed and definite department must the scene of his own

¹ See Ezek. xxxvii. 6—10.

duty be placed; to some appointed ruler, under God, must his own authority be made subordinate, and the account of its discharge be rendered. Hence those Parochial divisions of our Church, in which each minister is commanded to carry on his own work, in the spirit of that Divine Master who hath summoned him to it, and who alone can bring it to a successful issue; and hence the subordination of all inferior orders of the Ministry to the Diocesans respectively set over them to warn, to encourage, to advise. In all this the Church has devised the means which have been thought most effectual for the accomplishment of that end which the Apostle urges in the text;—in all this she labours faithfully to preach the Gospel to every creature, that both those who are afar off, and those who are nigh, may have “access by one spirit unto the Father,” and be “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God,” and be “built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord¹.”

It is one thing, however, to acknowledge the wisdom of those means by which the Church,

¹ Ephes. ii. 18—21.

established in this land, seeks to make that establishment a source of usefulness and blessing to the people, and another to increase their efficiency in proportion to the increasing exigencies of the times. If we acknowledge the one, we must, as an obvious consequence, admit the necessity of the other; and hence, they who would pray for the peace of our Jerusalem, and love to see her “as a city that is at unity in herself,” must ever look with watchful and anxious mind to the difficulties and duties that gather around her, and strengthen the hands of those that seek to do her good. If in some Parishes,—and they are many,—the multiplying population have outstripped the means of spiritual instruction originally assigned to them, there must the effort be made to open up fresh springs of holy consolation. If in others, the extent of the Parochial boundaries be so great, or the location of the Church be so remote, as to place a large proportion of the inhabitants beyond the reach of daily or weekly intercourse with their appointed ministers, there let the words of the prophet be remembered and obeyed, “Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes¹,” that shelter may be provided for the out-cast.

¹ Is. liv. 2.

These are no imaginary cases. The very place in which we are now assembled affords an evidence of the evil to which I advert, and of the effort which has been made to correct it. In a district, the length of which, if I am rightly informed, is eight miles, and in which, from this quarter of it,—a quarter where so many of its inhabitants have their dwelling-place,—the spire of the Parish church is seen by the passing traveller but as a distant object in the landscape, it is manifest that, among a large proportion of the people, the ordinances of the Church must have been but imperfectly administered. Not that you have been denied the privilege of Christian truth, or the blessings of Christian example, for I know that your appointed ministers have laboured faithfully among you, and that you have loved them for their work's sake;—but, nevertheless, all who have been so situated, must to a certain extent have been hindered in running the race that is set before them. To the careless professors of Christianity a specious pretext must have been afforded for “for-saking the assembling of themselves together¹,” whilst to the infirm and aged, there could have been but few, if any, opportunities of enjoying that hope or of realizing that wish, the expression of which hath fallen, I trust not in vain, from our lips this

¹ Heb. x. 25.

day, "O how amiable are thy dwellings: thou Lord of hosts! My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.—Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be alway praising thee. For one day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness¹."

Ought not your hearts, then, my brethren, to be thankful, and your tongues give praise unto the Lord for the privileges secured to you and your children by the solemn service of this day? And ought you not to hold their names too in grateful remembrance who have been the instruments of raising up among you this House of Prayer? Not that we are met here to offer unto any creature the praise that is due only to the Creator. "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" Yea, "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine:"—"all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee²." Yet is it

¹ Ps. lxxxiv. 1, 2, 4, 10, 11. This is one of the Psalms appointed to be read in the Consecration Service.

1 Cor. iv. 7.

² 1 Chron. xxix. 11. 14.

not forbidden us, my friends, to acknowledge the help of those who fulfil Christ's law by bearing our burdens¹ ; to derive from it fresh motives for maintaining a kindly fellowship with those who are around us, and for praying that these bonds of social intercourse may daily be more and more strengthened by the constraining love of Christ our Saviour.

For is it a light blessing, think ye, of which ye are now made partakers ? to live within sound of the Sabbath bell, and within reach of Sabbathical observances, and to see this House of Prayer, with its quiet and unobtrusive adornments of pious reverence, " separated, from henceforth, from all unhallowed, ordinary, and common uses, dedicated entirely to God's service, for reading therein his most holy word, for celebrating his sacraments, for offering to his glorious majesty the sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving, and for blessing his people in his name² ?" Is it a light thing, to be invited here to bring your children unto the Lord, to pray that here they may be washed and sanctified with the Holy Ghost in baptism, and, being delivered from the wrath of God, that they may be received here into the ark of Christ's church ? Is it a light thing to know

¹ Gal. vi. 2.

² Prayer repeated by the Bishop in the Consecration Service.

that here they may be “taught the truth as it is in Jesus,” and receive that “form of sound words¹,” which we have heard and received from the fathers of old time?—that here they may be led to renew their baptismal vows, and pray for grace faithfully to fulfil the same?—that here the followers of Christ, who truly and earnestly repent them of their sins, and are in love and charity with their neighbour, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in His holy ways, are invited to draw near with faith and take that holy Sacrament which Christ hath instituted as a pledge of His love, and for a continual remembrance of His death, to their great and endless comfort?—that each Sabbath day they shall be encouraged to come within these gates with thanksgiving, and into these courts with praise, and here bow down with their brethren in prayer to God, and here listen to His blessed word read and urged upon their souls by one that must give account thereof at the judgment seat of Christ? Is it a light thing, that, for each changing scene of joy or sorrow, of hope or fear, which this chequered world brings round, there shall be found in the ordinances of the sanctuary now opened to you, a guide, a companion, a support?—that they who shall be joined together in the holy estate of

¹ 2 Tim. i. 13.

Matrimony, may here pledge their solemn vows in the sight of God; and here, upon their bended knees implore His blessing, that they may remain in perfect love and peace together, and live according to His laws unto their lives' end? And when that end of life shall come, as come it must, "when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened;" when "the silver cord shall be loosed, and the golden bowl broken, when the pitcher shall be broken at the fountain, or the wheel at the cistern¹,"—is it a light thing, think ye, to be assured, that, in the ground adjoining this holy place, the bodies of those who worshipped within its walls shall rest in peace, and be "preserved from all indignities, whilst their souls are safely kept in the hands 'of their faithful Redeemer"²;—that here the mourners shall be reminded "not to be sorry as men without hope for them that sleep in Jesus," but, blessing the name of the Lord for all that He hath taken away as well as for all He hath given, commit the body to the ground, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change

¹ Eccles. xii. 3. 6.

² Prayer for Consecration of the Burial Ground.

our vile body, that it may be like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself¹?"

Assuredly, my brethren, these are privileges for the participation of which you may well be thankful. You have heard of them by the hearing of the ear, but now your eye seeth them. They are brought home to your very heart in all their actual reality, and, in the solemn service of this day, the prayer of faith has been offered up, through Christ's name, for the saving application of them unto your souls. Will you not rejoice, then, in the completion of this good work, and assist those who, by God's blessing, have brought it to this issue? If there be any here who have not yet had it in their power to assist their brethren, in defraying the expense which has necessarily been incurred in raising and preparing this edifice for Christian worship, need I remind them of the obligation laid upon them now to do so? Need I observe that the interests involved in the present consecration of this house to God's service, are much too important and enduring to allow any spectator to look with calm indifference upon the scene: and, that, if we have been permitted to bear a part in this holy ordinance, none of us can safely

¹ The Burial Service.

permit any temporary burden to encumber the spiritual blessings which we believe will flow from it? The burden, I trust, is not great; but let not a vestige of it remain: let free and ample scope be given for yourselves and for your children to worship, in this place, the God of your fathers.

Draw near, I beseech you, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith. Plead the merits of Christ's atonement, and trust in the fulfilment of Christ's promise. The words of Solomon have been read in your ears this day, wherewith he besought the presence of Jehovah to visit the holy place which he had chosen. Remember ye the same words, and by your lips let the same prayer be uttered: "Hear thou, O Lord, in heaven thy dwelling place; and when thou hearest, forgive." Yea, urge ye this prayer with the heartfelt consciousness that ye need it; urge it in the full conviction that God's presence is confined no longer to the place which He once chose out of the whole earth to place his name there; but that wheresoever two or three are gathered together in His name, there will He be in the midst of them¹; and that the forgiveness which you seek is promised through His merits who hath reconciled you "unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby²." Thus

¹ Matt. xviii. 20.

² Ephes. ii. 16.

shall ye be “filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jēsus Christ unto the glory and praise of God¹.” Thus shall the spirit of patience, of love, of zeal, pervade each word and work and thought of yours; and thus shall the hope be realized in the last great day, when every kindred, and tongue, and nation, shall be assembled around the throne of the Eternal Judge, that they who have been permitted to walk together as friends in the courts of the Lord’s house on earth, have neither met here, nor prayed here, in vain.

¹ Phil. i. 11.

THE END.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF LIVING AND DYING
IN THE SERVICE OF THE LORD.

A SERMON

PREACHED OVER THE REMAINS OF THE

LATE REVEREND
JOHN SIMONS,
L. L. B.
RECTOR OF ST. PAUL'S CRAY, KENT,

ON MONDAY, AUGUST 15, 1836.

BY THE REVEREND
THOMAS BAGNALL-BAKER,
M. A.

MINISTER OF WOBURN EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, TAVISTOCK SQUARE,
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TO THE READER.

It is hoped, that whatever deficiency in composition, perspicuity, or diction, may appear in the following discourse, the mantle of charity may be cast over the same ; as extempore sermons taken down when delivered, and as, in the present instance, published literally as preached, have seldom the same advantage in the above respects, as those that are prepared with a view to the press. However, should any thing good be found herein, let the glory thereof be given to God ; and if any thing to the contrary, ascribe the same to the fallen nature of the Preacher.

A SERMON.

2 TIMOTHY IV. 7, 8.

*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course,
I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for
me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the
righteous judge, shall give me at that day : and not to
me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing,*

It is the blessed privilege of every true believer, to adopt, as his own language, the animating and triumphant language of the Apostle in the text, while under the realizing prospect of an immediate entrance into the eternal world. In reference to such, St. John says, in the Apocalypse, the fourteenth chapter and the thirteenth verse, "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth ; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them." Therefore, beloved, since their warfare is terminated, their labour ceased, their journey ended, their multiplied enemies vanquished, and themselves eternally secured in Jesus Christ our living head, they enter into glory, with

triumphant songs, shouting, Grace, grace ! Victory, victory ! through the blood of the Lamb ! Or, in the language of my text, you may fancy the departed spirit of him, whose remains are here before you, while just setting his foot on the vestibule of eternal glory, exclaiming, “ I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing.”

Before I enter on the interpretation of this scripture, I would just remark, beloved, that it is my determination, as heretofore when I have appeared amongst the inhabitants of this parish, to preach unto you, a faithful gospel sermon. I am emboldened to do this, in consequence of what, perhaps, I might say was a requisition from him around whose remains you are at present assembled. I remember on a recent occasion, coming home with him, and while we sat at his table, we entered into a conversation respecting what may be called funeral sermons ; when in his peculiar phraseology he addressed me in this language ; ‘ My child,’ said he, ‘ if ever it should please God, that either you, or any one of my Christian Brethren, should be called upon to preach a sermon after my death, take care, that you preach Jesus Christ and not John Simons.’ It is my determination to preach Christ, because I know, beloved, that if it were possible for him to address you on this

occasion, his language would be that of the Apostle Paul, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, twentieth verse, it is “ my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that, with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by *death*.” And I would to God, that on the present occasion Christ Jesus should be magnified by *his death*.

The method I propose in the interpretation of this scripture—(and I trust I shall have your assistance in supplicating a throne of grace for me) is simply this.

I. TO CONSIDER THE CHRISTIAN’S LIFE AND CHARACTER AS COMPARED TO A WARRIOR,—*I have fought a good fight.*

II. AS COMPARED TO A TRAVELLER,—*I have finished my course.*

III. AS SUSTAINING THE CHARACTER OF A FAITHFUL STEWARD,—*I have kept the faith.*

IV. THE BLESSED ISSUE OF GENUINE CHRISTIANITY,—*henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.*

V. THE MANNER IN WHICH IT IS RECEIVED BY ALL THE LORD’S BELIEVING PEOPLE, NAMELY AS A GRATUITOUS GIFT,—*which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.*

VI. AND IN THE LAST PLACE, I SHALL SHOW THAT THE SAME RESULTS ALWAYS HAVE, AND EVER WILL BE PROVED TO SUCCEED SIMILAR ENTERPRIZES.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day,—and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

I. Beloved, I would compare THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE AND CHARACTER TO THAT OF A WARRIOR ;
 “ I have fought a good fight.”

There is nothing, perhaps, that tends more efficiently to elucidate the real nature of practical Christianity, than the conception of two armies, actively and resolutely engaged in an arduous warfare, each determined to conquer or to die. Two things are therefore necessary to be considered, to the apprehension of the true state of the contest, in reference to the believer's character ; the first is the qualifications of the soldier, and the second a knowledge of the enemies he has to contend with.

1. Now under this first head of my discourse, I first call your attention to the qualifications of the soldier. “ I have fought a good fight,” says the Apostle. It is necessary, beloved, as you know, that he should be enlisted, or have his name enrolled in the King's books, before it can be said, that he goes forth under public authority, to fight the battles of the country, or to bear the standard of his Captain. It is necessary in reference to the spiritual soldier, that God the Holy Ghost should have brought him into the reception of the truth, as it is in Jesus Christ,

and should have called him forth to be a soldier of the cross ; otherwise it cannot be said, that he goes forth under public authority. You may remember what our Saviour on this subject says, in the sixth chapter of the Gospel of St. John, the forty-fourth and forty-fifth verses, “ No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him ; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.” Now I say, it is absolutely necessary, that the Holy Spirit should make the soldiers of the cross acquainted with the will of the eternal Father, not only in reference to the salvation of their own souls, but in reference to the necessity of preaching and teaching Jesus Christ to the souls of others, in order that his name may be glorified, and his Church edified.

I believe, beloved, in reference to this, that our departed friend was enlisted in the service of Christ, perhaps half a century ago, and since the day when he was enabled to read his name in the book of life, he has gone forward, preaching and teaching the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Apostle St. Paul says, “ Wrestling not with flesh and blood (only,) but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places ; ” Eph. vi. 12. giving evident proof that he was enlisted in the service of Christ by the blessed Spirit of our God.

My dear hearers, let me here for one moment exhort you, as I have been accustomed to do from this pulpit, to examine your hearts, whether you be enlisted in the service of Jesus Christ our Lord, and whether the Spirit of God has testified to your souls, that your names are enrolled in the book of life. Religion, remember, is a personal thing !

It is necessary, further, beloved, that we should not only, in the first instance, be sent forth by the authority of Almighty God, in this arduous undertaking, but that we should have a right knowledge of the art of war. To send an individual forward, altogether ignorant of the nature of arms, and the duties he has to perform, would bespeak the greatest foolishness in the mind of him so sending him. Hence it appears, that every one so sent forth, should be acquainted with the use of arms ; otherwise the weapons, with which he is furnished, would rather turn to his own destruction, than to his advantage, and he would be brought to say with David, when Saul put upon him his armour, " I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them : " 1 Sam. xvii. 39. he would be obliged to cast them off, and taking " the sling " of the gospel in his hand, accompanied with " the stone " of the Spirit of God, he would be enabled to do more, than in the use of that unlawful armour, not put upon him by God. In the Christian warfare then, it is necessary that a man should be acquainted with the art of war, before he be sent forth. The apostle, in 1 Timothy i. 18, 19, says,

“This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare ; holding faith, and a good conscience, which (good conscience,) some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck.”

It is necessary, I say, that a person should be acquainted with the doctrines of God's holy word, that he should be brought to a right understanding of divine truth, that he should be enabled to wield the sword of the Spirit when it is put into his hand, otherwise, you may suppose, as I have already said, that the weapons that he holds will turn to his own destruction. Again, the Apostle speaks on the same subject, in 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4. : and he says, “Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ ; no man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” How necessary that, in reference to the ministers of the gospel at least, they should be rightly informed respecting the truths of God's holy word, in order that, with efficiency, they may engage in promoting the glory of God and the salvation of immortal souls !

Here again, I must say, that our departed brother was well acquainted with the word of God. I never heard him in all the conversations I had with him on scriptural subjects, I never heard him, I say, advance a single doctrine, but he substantiated the truth of it by a reference to scripture. “If they speak not ac-

according to this word," he was accustomed to say, "it is because there is no light in them." Isai. viii. 20. I never heard him require from a single individual, attention to any particular precept, but he showed the necessity of it by the word of God. He was well acquainted with the art of Christian warfare, and consequently enabled to discharge his duties, as a Christian minister, with efficiency, with satisfaction, and with success.

Something more, however, my brethren, is required of a Christian warrior ; he must not only be enlisted in the service of God and acquainted with the art of war, but he must be under the influence of great courage. A cowardly spirit will not do here ; for if you have an army of such soldiers brought into the field, immediately danger, distress, and death present themselves, they will flee before the enemy, and instead of obtaining a victory, they will, while flying, perhaps, lose their own lives in doing so. Hence I say it is necessary, that we ourselves should be under the influence of great spiritual courage, to the carrying on of this spiritual warfare. We should be strong in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, fully determined that we will never give up the contest, making the outposts of yesterday the trench of to-day, depending upon Jesus Christ alone, pursuing our spiritual enemies from one place to another, until, having completely driven them from the field, we may use the exulting language of the Apostle Paul, I am "more than conqueror through him that loved" me.

Rom. viii. 37. But, beloved, if there be a spirit of cowardice, the taunts and reproaches of men, the corruptions of our own evil hearts, and the suggestions and oppositions of the wicked one, unitedly conspiring together, will force us to give way, and consequently we shall come off with disgrace. If we can but trust the Lord Jesus Christ, and rely upon the mighty power of God that is put forth in our behalf, we shall always be enabled to experience that we are more than equal to the greatest enemies we have to contend with.

This spirit of courage, I do think, you will assert with me, our departed friend possessed to a very considerable degree. I am sure that I have seen him in such situations, and surrounded by such persons, that, if there were any thing that could have deterred him from speaking the truth, it would have been circumstances such as those in which I have seen him. But there was not any thing that could have deterred him from faithfully preaching, and scripturally teaching the truth as it is in Jesus Christ; and his accustomed manner of speaking on such occasions was, to be scripturally faithful, leaving the consequences in the hands of Him, to whom consequences belong;—may you and I be thus faithful!

2. Again, it is not only necessary, that the soldier of Jesus Christ should be enlisted himself, should have a knowledge of the art of warfare, and should possess a spirit of courage,—but it is necessary, that he should be acquainted with the powers, numbers,

and position of the enemy, in order to his success. Then, beloved, I would represent the enemies he has to contend with, in a three-fold point of view.

And there are first, the enemies in our own evil hearts, and, O they are many! The Prophet Jeremiah says, "The heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." Jer. xvii. 9. "Evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, witchcraft, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness," yea, a catalogue of sins, that the Apostle makes mention of, all have their root in our carnal natures. And these are to be contended with, by the mighty power of God's Spirit put forth on our behalf, and contended with to such a degree, that if we do not fight with them every inch of ground we travel, we shall fall from Jesus Christ and from the reception of that salvation which is in him. I say, we have to contend with a multitude of evils in our own hearts. There is the darkness of our understandings, the waywardness of our dispositions, the alienation of our wills, there are those ungodly thoughts and diabolical principles, which are more or less experienced by every saint of God whilst in this wicked world, and carrying about with him a body of sin and death which he does. And these are so powerfully at work in the soul of every believer, that, were it not for the strength of God put forth in his behalf, he would come off with the loss of his soul. Even as to this, many a time, though I believe it was the privilege of our departed brother, to enjoy more of the grace of God in

this respect, than most of us, yet many a time have I heard him deplore the sinfulness of his heart, using the language of the Apostle, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" but yet exultingly he could say, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord; so then, with the mind, I myself serve the law of God."

Another company of enemies, we have to meet with, are those we meet with in the world; the doctrines of men, the temptations, suggestions, honours, and pleasures; those things which appear unto the eye, the ear, the appetite, and so on.—There is in the world a multiplicity of enemies, all marshalled together for the purpose of preventing us from the enjoyment of the truth as it is in Jesus,—We have the opposition of the men of the world to contend with; and sometimes this rises so high, as almost to deter us, if possible, from the exercise of that ministerial faithfulness, which we ought ever to manifest in dispensing the truths of God's holy word. And are there not many of us, beloved, that know something of this? And in our desire to please men, are we not sometimes found unfaithful to God? There is such a desire in the mind of every man, especially of every Christian minister, not to give the slightest unnecessary offence, that it is a hard thing for us to be faithful to our God, and faithful to the souls of our fellow-creatures.

And yet I must say, that even here, again, you have had an example before you, for half a century,

of a man, who, in opposition to the doctrines of men, and to all the false opinions that have been advanced, setting his face like a flint against them, and was especially enabled, in the language of the apostle, once more to say, "I am more than conqueror."

Then there is another spiritual enemy, and this is Satan. Peter says of him, in his first epistle, the vth chap. 8th and 9th verses, "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist, stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren, that are in the world." And beloved, we have to contend it with him every inch of the way. He never ceases to annoy, though he never yet was able to destroy a single soul of the elect of God; he is endeavouring by every mean in his power, in the exercise of his subtle machinations, to draw the ministers of the gospel from the faithful dispensation of the word of God, so that thereby he may ruin their immortal souls.

You are ready to ask me, and will he never give up the contest? No, beloved; the remains of your beloved minister, could they speak, would testify the truth of what I am about to assert, that, for the last half century, Satan has been withstanding and opposing him. It was only this day last week, that he was enabled finally to tread him under his feet. Although Satan has no power over the souls of God's people, to do them any real injury, he will annoy

them to the utmost of his power; and may God grant *Us* grace to withstand him.

All these the Christian is enabled to overcome, by the power of Christ, through faith. It is not through our watchfulness, or our tears of repentance, it is not in consequence of any efficacy existing in the means of grace, which we desire constantly to exercise ourselves in; it is not any thing, I say, in us, by which we are able to overcome all our spiritual enemies, and to say, "I have fought a good fight : " But it is by the apprehension of the power of Jesus Christ, through faith, in the exercise of which, we are enabled to overcome the sin within us, the world without us, and Satan who opposes us. For the Apostle says, All are yours ; " whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." And I ask you, what more can you want ? Hence therefore, true believers may say, " I have fought a good fight ; " or, in other words, I am enabled by the fight which Jesus Christ has fought, in the apprehension thereof to overcome, and to have the victory.

II. In the second place, I would compare the character of a Christian to A TRAVELLER ; " I have finished my course."

A person taking a long journey can have no positive assurance of safety,—He cannot pre-discern what may befall him by the way ; neither is he sure,

on account of the distance, the weakness of his powers, and the dangers he may have to encounter, whether he shall arrive at his destination or not ; the issue of things lies hid in the womb of futurity. Not so clouded, beloved, are the things that relate to the souls of God's elect, for success here is certain, and no traveller ever yet finally lost his way to the kingdom that hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God.

But notwithstanding this, the course pursued is sometimes a tedious and a long one ; and God sees it necessary to lead his people through many a devious way, for beneficial purposes, in reference to their souls. This you will find to have been the case, in conducting the Israel of God of old ; it is said in the viiith chapter of Deut. the 2nd verse, “ And thou shalt remember all the way, which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or know.” Hence I say that the journey, which many a Christian has to take, is experienced to be a tedious and a long one.

And especially may we so speak, in reference to the case before us. Eighty-three years has he maintained his course ; I will not say his Christian course, but for the greatest part of it, he has maintained his Christian course. And although he has enjoyed much of the presence of his God during his journey, yet it may be said to have been a tedious or a long

one to him ; for, of late, daily living in expectation of his dismissal to the kingdom of glory, and enjoying those anticipations which it is the privilege of believers to enjoy, he has daily been looking for the call of his heavenly Father, “ Come up hither ; wherefore standest thou without ? ”

And yet it pleases God, for beneficial purposes, to continue us on earth, some longer and some shorter. But what are those beneficial purposes ?

It is explained in this passage ; “ to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no.” Beloved, how shall you or I know any thing of the supports of divine grace,—what shall we know of the manna that comes down from heaven, supporting the children of God in the wilderness, unless there be a necessity for such support ? Shall we ever see the power of Almighty God, smiting the rock, and bringing out fountains of living water for the support of our souls, unless there be a necessity for so doing ! Hence while travelling through this wilderness, it is made a blessing to our souls, because God is continually supporting us as by a miracle ; strengthening us with all consolations ; and enabling us to go on, looking unto Jesus, who is the author, until finally he becomes the finisher of our faith.

Not only is the course difficult because it is long, but it is, moreover attended with many deprivations. And you, my dear hearers, can scarcely understand what we, the ministers of the gospel, have to contend

with. We are obliged to deny ourselves of many things, which you consider as lawful. We are obliged to deny ourselves the enjoyment of many persons and many things, of which in reference to you, the world would say nothing at all. We know the necessity, as the apostle says, "not to eat flesh while the world standeth, if it make our brother to offend." Ministers have many deprivations, which you are totally ignorant of, and which are absolutely necessary to be borne, in order to the more efficient discharge of their manifold duties. But all too have deprivations. What was the apostle St. Paul obliged and enabled to deprive himself of: when he said, "I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ," Phil. iii. 8, 9. And similar to the experience of the children of Israel in the wilderness is our experience; it is mentioned in Deut. viii. 16, where it is said, "He fed thee with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;" and again, in the 15th verse it is said, "He led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; he brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint." And I say our Christian course is attended with many deprivations. Sometimes the sun perhaps may

appear to hide his head behind a dark cloud for several days. Sometimes we may have to pass through a shower of persecutions ; sometimes to endure a storm of temptations. In one way or in another, our Christian course is not only day by day having the victory, but day by day contending to the utmost of our strength, and being obliged to deny ourselves many things, for the sake of the promotion of the glory of God.

Again, beloved, the Christian course is dangerous, on account of false companions, whom we meet with in the way. We all of us know, that in taking a journey it is very pleasant to have a delightful companion ; and sometimes an individual may seem such to us, and we may be delighted with his conversation, but because of the hypocrisy of his heart, he may only travel with us for a time, in order to turn us out of the way, and to lead us to our own destruction. So the Apostle Peter says, in his second epistle, the second chapter, first and second verses, “ But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bringing upon themselves swift destruction ; and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.” And I say, when the men of the world, and when false professors would endeavour for a time to go hand in hand with us, and we may appear for a time to be delighted with their

conversation, and the correctness of their manners, yet very soon, perhaps, they turn out to be the rankest hypocrites in the service of religion, and they endeavour to poison our minds, and to direct our hearts from Christ to something in ourselves, persuading us, perhaps, that because of the regularity of our lives, or our services in the cause of Christ, we are so well pleasing in the sight of God, that if possible, they would turn us out of the way of peace, and lead us in that way which issueth in destruction.

And it is a difficult matter for the true believer, in passing through this world, to have such knowledge of the tricks and contrivances of men, as to be on his guard against their false doctrines and anti-scriptural schemes.

It is, moreover, a difficult course, on account of the Satanic opposition, which we are very frequently meeting with : Satan is often transforming himself into an angel of light. He enters into our churches and chapels, into our closets, and sometimes into our pulpits, for the purpose, if possible, of diverting the mind from Jesus Christ. And this he will continue to do, as I have already said, every inch of our journey.

But although, beloved, it is a tedious, a dangerous, and a difficult journey, nevertheless it infallibly conducts the traveller to eternal glory. “ A highway shall be there,” says the Spirit, ‘by the mouth of the prophet, “ a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness ; the unclean

shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those ; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein," Isa. xxxv. 8, so that it leads the Christian infallibly to the kingdom of God. And we none of us doubt, I think, but that it has so conducted him, whose remains are now before us, to that glorious place.

III. In the third place, I would consider the Christian character, under the idea OF A FAITHFUL STEWARD ; " I have kept the faith."

Here you have the idea of a person, under the constraining influence of such love to his Lord, as to be devoted with an unflinching faithfulness to his master's commands and interests.

This will lead me to give a short description of *that faith*, which is here said to be *kept*. In doing so, I shall call your attention to some leading doctrines, as taught in our church, and as held by him who is now departed from us. I would substantiate all I say, by referring you to the Scriptures, and the formularies of our church. I do this especially, because from my intimate acquaintance with our departed friend, and from repeated conversations with him on these subjects, I am well acquainted with his accustomed manner of speaking and thinking on them ; and I shall do it in order to shew you that he was strictly orthodox in his faith.

I would describe then " the faith " not only as including the doctrine of the Trinity, as contained in the first of our Thirty-nine Articles, and explained in

the Creed of St. Athanasius, but other doctrines accustomed to be preached from the pulpit of this church. And the first I name is God's everlasting love, "whereby" as our seventeenth Article says, "before the foundations of the world were laid, he hath constantly decreed by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation, those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour," &c. This was a great and leading truth, which you have frequently heard preached, that the everlasting, electing love of God was the source and bottom of every blessing we enjoy; and that if we trace up the stream of mercy, that flows from under the throne of God, we shall be brought to this conclusion, that, before the foundations of the world were laid, he hath decreed our everlasting salvation, giving us unto the Lord Jesus Christ, who by his perfect work upon the cross hath redeemed us unto God, making perfect them that are sanctified or set apart by the Father. This you will find to be a doctrine of the word of God, by merely referring to what is said in 1 Peter i. 2, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." I remember, on an occasion when this doctrine was brought under his consideration, that in explaining it to a particular individual, whose name it is not necessary to mention, he said, 'You must ever bear in mind, that the love

of God was not exercised towards you in consequence of any foreseen good works done, or to be done, by you, but it has existed in the bosom of the eternal Jehovah from eternity, in consequence of which, and, to which all other blessings, in reference to your time, state, and existence, as well as your everlasting glory, all other blessings, I say, must be referred.' This you will find again stated in Rom. viii. 29, 30. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren ; moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called ; and whom he called, them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." You will find it, too, in the Collect of All Saint's Day ; ' O Almighty God,' the worshippers of the Church of England say, ' who hast knit together *thine elect* in *one* communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son, Christ our Lord, grant us grace so to follow thy blessed saints, in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys, which thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love thee.'

Another doctrine which he taught, was that of the total depravity of human nature, through the fall of our first parents. And he was accustomed to use such passages of scripture as this, in the substantiation of the assertions which he made ; " God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, or that did

seek after God ; every one of them is gone back, they are altogether become filthy ; there is none that doeth good, no not one." And he would describe the depravity of human nature, in reference to particular individuals, saying, They have no light in their understandings, no power in their wills, no inclination in their affections, but they are so totally corrupt by nature, that it is by the mighty power of God the Holy Ghost alone, that any one soul is brought to believe in Jesus Christ, through whom they experience joy and peace in believing. This is clearly declared, you perceive, in the ninth and tenth articles of the Church of England ; the ninth of which says, ' Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk ; but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is ingendered of the offspring of Adam ; whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit ; and therefore in every person born into the world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation ; and this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated ; whereby the lust of the flesh, called in the Greek *φρονημα σαρκος*, which some do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some the affection, the desire of the flesh, is not subject to the law of God ; and although there is no condemnation for them that believe, and are baptized, yet the apostle doth confess, that concupiscence and lust, hath of itself the

nature of sin.' And I know that it was an opinion of his, and of every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, that regeneration did not better the old nature at all ; but that the corrupt nature of man, even after his regeneration, was as entirely contaminated and depraved as it was before, and that regeneration was a formation of Jesus Christ in our hearts, the hope of glory ; not the amendment of the old nature, but a new creation by the Holy Spirit of God, that which was born of the flesh remaining flesh, while that which was born of the Spirit is spirit. The total corruption of human nature is further spoken of, in the tenth article of our church, and as this was a doctrine he was accustomed particularly to preach, I refer to this in order further to shew his orthodoxy ; ' The condition of man after the fall of Adam, is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God ; wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.'

Another doctrine which he was accustomed to preach, was that of perfect redemption by the obedience and death of Jesus Christ our Lord, particularly treated of in the eleventh article of our church, ' We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith ; and not for our own works or de-

servings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as is more largely expressed in the Homily on Justification.' And he would speak of this redemption in such a way, that I am quite sure none could understand his meaning, but persons who were taught by the Holy Spirit of God. He would speak of the imputation of the Church's sin to Christ. He would say, that God the Father laid on him the iniquity of us all. And in reference to that redemption, that it was a full, perfect, and sufficient satisfaction for the sins of those for whom he shed his blood. He would describe it as a complete atonement for all sins, so that they are said to be blotted out of God's book, and sought for but not found. I have heard him say, the eye of Great Jehovah could not discover a single sin in a single one of his people. This is in accordance with the doctrines of the word of God, especially in Hebrews, where it is declared, "he hath perfected for ever, them that are sanctified." Heb. x. 14.

Hence another doctrine which he was particularly attached to, was, that the children of God, in the estimation of Jehovah, are without sin. You will not suppose, that I mean that he asserted, that there was no sin in the man after his regeneration, or that God, looking upon him as a fallen creature, could observe no iniquity in him: but he was speaking of God viewing every true believer in Christ Jesus our Lord, and looking at him so, he could, in the lan-

guage of the apostle, say, I see "no spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," or, as Paul expresses it in writing to the Colossians, "to present you holy, and unblameable, and unprovable in his sight." This certainly bespeaks the perfection of every believer in Jesus Christ our Lord. And, beloved, in what perfection would you wish to stand before God? Would you wish to stand in your own righteousness, or in the righteousness of Jesus Christ? Would you not say, with the prophet, "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags?" but "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

He would, moreover, further assert, that those who were loved by the eternal Father with an everlasting love, redeemed and justified by the precious blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, are always, by the blessed influence of the Spirit of God, united to their living head by faith; and this doctrine was one, which he particularly delighted to expatiate upon. He would often remind us of that passage, "as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." Hence, he said to me one day, 'Do you not perceive, that the word "Christ," here, takes in both head and members? Do you not perceive, that, in consequence of the doctrine of union, you are one with Christ, and have an equal right and title with him to everlasting salvation, and that all the blessings that God has to bestow are your's, and shall sooner or later be poured into your soul through faith.'

Then he would sometimes speak of the evidences of Christianity in our hearts; and he would say, that the man was not advanced very far, that did not personally know for himself, that his name was written in the book of life; and he would frequently bring forward that passage, "Rejoice not that the devils are subject unto you, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

Do not suppose, that there is the slightest appearance of presumption in this. I maintain, on the authority of the word of God, that it is the bounden duty of every believing soul, to seek to know that he is one with Jesus Christ our Lord, that his name is actually written in the book of life, and that all that God has to bestow is his.

It is the blessed privilege of every true believer, to know that all those promises and declarations given to us, are intended by God to be fulfilled in our experience; and it is our duty to know what the apostle St. John speaks of in 1 John v. 10, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself."

It would not be proper in me, to enter here into the nature of scriptural testimony, in reference to the children of God. One idea more; and that is the certainty of the saint's final perseverance. This was a doctrine, you all know, which he received in its fullest extent. It is a doctrine taught in the Bible, where the Apostle Paul says, in the eighth chapter of Romans, "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor

things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God." And where is the soul of your Pastor at this moment, beloved? Is it possible that any thing can have separated him? "In all these things," says the apostle, "we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us; for I am persuaded that neither death, nor life," &c. none of these things, "shall be able to separate us from the love of God." And therefore there is a certainty of the salvation of him that is brought into the reception of Jesus Christ our Lord.

IV. In the fourth place, let us consider THE BLESSED ISSUE OF CHRISTIANITY; "henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

It is called a crown of righteousness, because, in the first place, it is the reward of the righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord. For inasmuch as he has fulfilled the demands of the eternal Father, in reference to the church, this crown, by his hands, is put upon the head of faith, in order that faith may take it off, and cast it at his feet, and say, "thou art worthy; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto God kings and priests." It is called "a crown of righteousness," because it is given by a "righteous judge." God is a righteous judge; and therefore on the score of his justice, this crown must be bestowed upon every one that believes in Jesus

Christ. And if this question were proposed to us, whether we would rather trust to the mercy of God out of Christ, or the justice of God in Christ, we should be brought to this conclusion, 'rather let me rely on the justice of God in Christ, because, as God is a righteous judge, and has received a perfect satisfaction for sin, through Jesus Christ our Lord, the crown is rightly mine.'

It is moreover called "a crown of righteousness," because it is bestowed on a righteous people, made such in the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and moreover, by an inward righteousness, which teaches them to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts," and to "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present (evil) world." Titus ii. 12.

It is called a "crown of righteousness," because it is given to us in token of victory; and as it was the custom of old, that the individual who had obtained any particular victory, was crowned, so God immediately places the crown of glory on our heads, even the head of faith, upon our immediate entrance into glory.

It is called "a crown of righteousness," because it is a badge of dignity. We shall have no more sin within us to contend with, nor the world and Satan without us; but perfect dominion will be bestowed upon us, and enjoyed by us, and that through all eternity.

V. In the fifth place, I would consider the manner in which it is received, namely, AS A GRATUITOUS

GIFT; "which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day."

Beloved, it seems a paradox to the men of the world, that the ministers of the gospel should be continually exhorting, and impressing upon their people to attend unto the various duties of our common Christianity, exercising themselves in prayer and praise, watching against sin, reading God's holy word, attending the public ministration of the same, and the reception of the symbols of the Saviour's dying love. I say, it is a paradox to the men of the world, that the ministers of God should be so constantly exhorting, and setting before their people the necessity of attending to these things, and yet, that after all, we should require, that they cast all their own righteousnesses from them as filthy rags, and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation. But nevertheless, this is the language of the text; and this has been preached among you for many years past; that notwithstanding you might have attained much scripture knowledge, and there might not have been any part of this book but what you could comprehend, nor any precept but what you practised, yet (it has been insisted on that,) as true believers, you should withdraw all dependence on your own "works of righteousness."

Here it is said, that "the righteous judge shall give" it you. It is the free, gratuitous gift of Almighty God. Hence you see a complete renunciation of all self-righteousness, in the contemplation of salvation. Beloved, are you willing thus to

renounce yourselves ? It is necessary that this question should be proposed to you ; are you willing thus to renounce yourselves ? If you are not, I cannot see how you can accept, in God's way, of Jesus Christ.

This implies, you see, strong faith and hope in Christ, and a belief in being ushered into the presence of God after death ; " which the Lord the righteous Judge shall *give me at that day.*"

VI. Lastly, I shall show, THAT THE SAME RESULTS ALWAYS HAVE, AND EVER WILL BE PROVED TO SUCCEED TO SIMILAR ENTERPRIZES ; " and not to me only," says the Apostle, " but unto all them also that love his appearing."

In the great blessings of the gospel, all the saints shall fare alike. They are all God's children ; and they shall have their portion, and exactly the same portion too ; for St. Jude calls it, third verse, " a common salvation." And therefore, I again revert to what I said in the commencement of my discourse to-day, might you not fancy, and is it anything contrary to sound doctrine to imagine, that your minister, immediately on entering the kingdom of glory, could use the language of this scripture, " I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, (or at this day,) and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

And did not your Pastor "love his appearing?" Was he not constantly speaking of the appearing of Christ? Was not his soul bound up in Jesus Christ? Might it not be said of him, that he was "hid with Christ in God?" "And when Christ, who is our life, shall appear," it is said, "we also shall appear with him in glory." And when Christ appeared, to call him out of this into the eternal world, it was that he might immediately appear with him in glory; which is his privilege, and which is our privilege.

This appears to be the case from the tenor of our Saviour's prayer, in the seventeenth chapter of St John, and the twenty-fourth verse, "Father," he says, "I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." And again, we know that "he ever liveth, to make intercession" for them that believe in him, which intercession shall be available for their introduction to eternal glory, as long as God remains faithful to his promise; and it is said, that "by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us," in the gospel, "which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."

Beloved, I might have detained you longer, to have advanced many things in reference to him, around whose remains we are here assembled. But

my feelings would not allow me to enter upon those particulars at this time, which might occur to my mind. I will give you one instance of that kind of spirit in which he was accustomed to live, and leave you to judge in what kind of spirit he would be likely to die. I remember on one occasion, when he came down from his room, he used these words, 'I have enjoyed so much of the love of God this morning, that I have been obliged to lay me down on my bed, and say, It is too much, Lord ; it is too much.' Such was the joy, such was the peace which he enjoyed.

And I believe, no longer ago than last Friday week, walking with one of his sons, and viewing the corn-fields near him, he burst forth into thanksgivings ; he spoke of the love of God ; he spoke of the manifestation of that love many, many years that are past, and he said, 'What an astonishing truth ! my eye is not dim, my ear is not heavy, neither is my natural force abated.' And you might have beheld his countenance express, during the conversation, that God was living in his soul, supporting a constitution that was almost in the grave ; yet, nevertheless, giving proof of a passage which I have already quoted, "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death." May the Lord impress upon you, my dear hearers, the great necessity of living by faith in Jesus Christ our Lord, that your latter end may be like his—through Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE LOVE OF GOD:

A

SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, HAMPSTEAD,

ON SUNDAY, MAY 1, MDCCCXXXVI.

BY

CHRISTOPHER CHURCHILL BARTHOLOMEW, M.A.

CURATE OF HAMPSTEAD:

AND

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TO
THE PARISHIONERS
OF
ST. JOHN'S, HAMPSTEAD,
THIS DISCOURSE
IS RESPECTFULLY ADDRESSED,
BY
THEIR SINCERE FRIEND AND WELL-WISHER,
THE AUTHOR.

A

S E R M O N,

§c.

ST. MATTHEW xxii. 37, 38.

“Jesus said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.”

IN the parallel passage to this in St. Mark, our blessed Lord quotes the original words in the sixth chapter of the book of Deuteronomy, where the Jewish lawgiver has closely connected the fundamental article of religious belief with an exhortation to the performance of the first religious duty:—“Hear oh Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might¹:” to which our Saviour, in the text, has added these emphatic words—“this is

¹ Deut. vi. 7.

the first and great commandment." Thus the mediators both of the old and the new covenant, have declared, that God is the object on which our affections should rest as their end; and I shall endeavour in the following discourse to show, that God is the *only* object which we *can* love "with *all* our heart, with *all* our soul, and with *all* our mind:" and that the love of God involves in itself every religious principle, and comprehends the substance and perfection of religious feeling.

Fallen as man is, faint and feeble indeed are his natural perceptions of, and aspirations after righteousness: ineffectual wishes, which his natural and unaided strength is utterly unable to bring to a good effect, and which are soon forgotten in the tumults of passion, or absorbed by the encroaching influence of the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life¹;" it is on these that he "wastes his impassioned might;" it is to these he directs all his energies; it is by these his hopes, his fears, his sympathies, are excited, and every faculty, both of body and mind, called into active exercise. Yet, into whatsoever channel his energies have been directed, however successful has been his pursuit of the object proposed, he never arrives at a point of perfect satisfaction and repose: the heart is still

¹ 1 John i. 16.

unsatisfied, an aching void is experienced, which, if it do not force him to confess with the preacher, that "all is vanity"¹, is yet enough to convince him that he is insufficient for his own happiness, and that, were he "to gain the whole world";² there would be feelings, affections, and wishes, that looked beyond it and above it.

This conscious sense of imperfection, this longing after something which may fully satisfy the desires of the inmost mind, is the solitary remaining proof, that man was created in the image of God; the impress not yet wholly effaced of his Divine origin; and wisely and mercifully has God ordained that this feeling should be strengthened by the many warnings which He gives us, in the general course of His natural and moral government, of the temporary character and imperfect nature of this present scene.

We live in a world, in which, without the light of revealed truth, we could discover but few and unconnected traces of a moral and righteous government; the mixture of good and evil every where presenting itself, the moral disorder and confusion every where prevailing, have, in all ages, baffled the inquiries of the wisest and most gifted of mankind; and still raise doubts and difficulties which are only, in part, soluble by the

¹ Eccles. i. 2.

² Matt. xxvi. 26.

scheme of grace and truth brought to light by the Gospel. For even the Christian, to whom the ways of God with man have been justified, does not expect to see clearly through every involvement in this intricate system of things. He feels that a state of trial and discipline is necessarily an imperfect state, and he has learnt to calm every feeling of doubt and distrust, by the humble and patient expectation of the time, when "that which is perfect shall come, and that which is in part shall be done away¹."

But it is not only this general view which convinces us of the imperfection attaching itself to all things earthly; it is felt far more keenly in the frailty of all worldly ties: husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, are daily and hourly separated the one from the other, as we proceed in our pilgrimage, the old familiar forms we loved, vanish from our path, and should we be permitted to attain the utmost period of human existence, it is, but too often, to find ourselves alone, the last surviving relic of connections which have been gradually and painfully dissolved.

A still stronger proof of the unsatisfying nature of all earthly objects of regard, is painfully pressed upon us, in the *imperfection of human sympathy*,

¹ 1 Cor. xiii. 10.

and the *waywardness of human affection*. Here, in this life, there is not, and cannot be, *perfect love* : in the nearest and dearest relations of life the leaven of selfishness mingles its base alloy : conflicting interests insensibly alienate from each other those who have been nourished at the same breast, and watched over with the same parental care ; we each of us form our separate connections, and pursue our separate interests, with a singleness of purpose,* a fixed and steady respect to our own private advantage, which must for ever prevent the full development of that principle of charity, which will be the source of pure and increasing happiness hereafter, when we shall all be united as the servants of one Master, the children of one Father, even God. And even they, on whom a merciful Providence has showered its choicest blessings, in the indulgence of the domestic affections, must be sensible, that, strictly speaking, heart does not answer to heart, even where circumstances have been most favourable to the enjoyment of reciprocal feelings and confidential intercourse. There are emotions and trains of thought in which we are, as it were, alone,—which we cannot impart, and in which none can participate,—in which our individual spirits are conscious of a separate existence, are sensible of wants and deficiencies which no earthly object can supply, of wishes and desires in which

they vainly look for the perfect sympathy of an answering mind.

Nor ought we to repine that we are thus constituted ; it is a part, not the least painful, of that moral discipline, by which we are constantly reminded that this life is an imperfect and probationary state ; that the world and all that therein is,—its riches, its honours, and even its purest and most permitted enjoyments,—cannot satisfy the cravings of the immortal spirit within us : that all these are means, and not the end ; means and instruments, by which our passions may be regulated, our feelings subdued and chastened, and our affections purified and prepared, for an eternal state of being, and for the perception and enjoyment of objects, which shall occupy us through boundless ages.

Is there then nothing on which, even here, the anxious and weary soul may repose with a full feeling of satisfied enjoyment ? nothing to which it can lift up its highest and noblest aspirations, and feel them overwhelmed and lost in the perfections which it contemplates ? no object which will ever unfold new sources of delight, disclose to it a holier happiness, shed on it a purer peace, enlarge its moral perceptions, and raise it equally above the cares and anxieties, the joys and sorrows of life ? There is one, and only one, and that is God Himself ; it is God alone, whom, in the full

sense of those emphatic words, we can love “with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind¹.”

Strange and impracticable as this command must ever appear to the feelings of the natural man, to him whose affections have as yet been fixed only upon earthly objects; yet, blessed be the God of all mercy, there are, I trust, amongst us, those who are awakened to the knowledge and hope of better things; who know that every page of the revealed word discloses, to the renewed mind, the love of God to man, and appeals to every sympathy of our nature, to every emotion of grateful trust and confidence, to “love Him who has first loved us².” “God is love³;”—this is the great truth which the Gospel illustrates. We look back to the earliest records of God’s dealings with man, and mercy and love are blended with the punishment of the first and fatal transgression. We trace, in the connected chain of providential orderings, by which the first covenant was established, the same gracious manifestations of the Almighty mind; one uniform purpose pervades the whole—to save a perishing world. The stream of prophecy flows on, increasing in depth and clearness, bearing us onward to one object, even that last and greatest proof of the love of

¹ Matt. ii. 37.

² 1 John iv. 19.

³ 1 John iv. 8.

God, when He sent His only-begotten Son to take upon Him our nature, and the voices of the heavenly host proclaimed, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men ¹."

But it is in the brief records of the life of Jesus Christ, that the strongest appeal is made to that principle of our nature, which constrains us to "love Him who has first loved us." If the invisible God whom "no man hath seen, or can see ²," be an object which we can only regard with reverential awe; yet in Him, His beloved Son, "the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person ³," we behold One, whose whole life was a practical comment on that gracious and earnest invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ⁴;" the pitying friend, even of the chiefest of sinners; the kind, indulgent, and compassionate Saviour, whose active benevolence neither injury nor ingratitude could abate, and whose enduring love shone, with undying splendour, amidst the cruelties of persecution and the agonies of death. Here indeed was *perfect love*. The Son of God was not only content to take upon Him our nature, to suffer, and to die for

¹ Luke ii. 14.

² 1 Tim. vi. 16.

³ Heb. i. 3.

⁴ Matt. xi. 28.

us, but He condescended to exhibit in His protracted humiliation, the depth and fulness of that love, which we can only in part conceive, and the contemplation of which will form the happiness of blessed spirits hereafter. Sinless Himself, He lived among the sinful ; pure and holy, in thought, word, and deed, He endured the companionship of those the thought of whose heart was only evil continually. The torment of the cross, and the expiring agony, were but the close of a life, passed, if not in bodily suffering, yet in anguish of mind, and the far keener sufferings of a wounded spirit, in witnessing the moral degradation of those whom He came to seek and to save. Yet this He endured patiently ; it was for this end He came into the world ; He came in a human form, to leave behind Him, a softened and endearing representation of the Divine character ; an object of love brought down to our human conceptions, and towards which our affections might be attracted and conciliated.

But even this has not exhausted the treasures of Divine grace, or the riches of God's love towards us. The Saviour hath ascended into heaven, but it is to be our effectual Intercessor before the throne of grace, to plead for us with the Father, to present our prayers, as our great High Priest, and clothe them with his own spotless righteousness. Nor are we, the redeemed

and purchased with a price, even with the precious blood of the Son of God, left to struggle, unaided, in a hopeless conflict with the passions and desires of that carnal mind, which is ever "at enmity with God¹," and opposes itself, so steadily and perseveringly, to the reception of His holy and spiritual law; else, vain indeed would be the costly atonement which has been made for our souls, and our efforts to resist the sin that dwelleth in us, would be but as the helplessness of infancy contending with the confirmed strength of manhood. But the Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, has been sent to teach us and guide us into all truth. Within us, and around us, dwelleth that Holy Spirit, whose mysterious agency searcheth the heart and trieth the reins of the children of men. As in God we live, and move, and have our natural being, so on his Spirit are we equally dependent, for the spiritual life and health of our souls, for every holy thought and good desire, for every word, every act, which evidences our faith and obedience. It is the Holy Spirit who worketh in us and with us, conforming us to the image of Christ, renewing us daily in righteousness and true holiness, and fitting us for that "inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and which

¹ Rom. viii. 17.

fadeth not away, which God hath prepared for them that love Him ¹."

Whether viewed, then, as Creator, Redeemer, or Sanctifier, still "God is love ²." True, He is a God of judgment, "with whom actions are weighed ³;" true, He is the Holy God, who is "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity ⁴;" true it is, that even under the covenant of grace, the soul that sinneth,—lives and dies in unrepented sin,—shall die eternally:—yet still, we cannot look at all that He hath done for our souls, His creating love, His redeeming mercy, His sanctifying grace, and not feel that He is indeed plenteous in goodness, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance ⁵."

With this holy and merciful Being, we are invited and encouraged to hold spiritual communion by prayer. "More ready to hear than we to pray, and wont to give more than either we desire or deserve ⁶," His ear is ever open to the supplicating sorrows of the contrite heart; He is ready at the first turning of our hearts towards Him, to pour on them, the precious influences of the Holy Spirit, and amidst all the promises of Scripture; there is none, which expresses more strongly, the paternal character of God, or which

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 9.

² 1 John iv. 8.

³ 1 Sam. ii. 3.

⁴ Hab. i. 13.

⁵ 2 Pet. iii. 9.

⁶ Collect for 12th Sunday after Trinity.

more encourages us to approach Him, as children who are conscious of, and confident in the greatness of their Father's love, than the express assurance of our blessed Lord, "Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you : for every one that asketh, receiveth ; and he that seeketh, findeth ; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall my heavenly Father give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him ¹ ?"

To love then God "with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength;" is not only our bounden duty, but should be an easy and delightful task, a free, unconstrained, and willing offering of the heart. It is sin that prevents this reasonable service ; it is the weakened state of our moral perceptions, the thralldom in which we are fast bound by our natural appetites and passions, which create both the incapacity and unwillingness to contemplate the Father of spirits. The love of God in the heart of man is a plant of celestial birth ; it must be implanted, nourished, and strengthened by the Holy Spirit. But before we can expect to be conscious of the indwelling of this Divine prin-

¹ Matt. vii. 7, 8. 11.

ciple, the heart must be fitted for its reception by a purifying discipline of all its affections, feelings, and desires; the old leaven must be purged away; sin in all its shapes must cease to have an *uncontrolled* dominion over us; whether it wear the grosser form of indulgence in fleshly lusts, or assume the more specious but not less fatal aspect of the love of the world, or the pride of life. Till the Spirit of God by His effectual agency, hath wrought in us this blessed change, blessed, even if accompanied by the sharpest pangs of penitence and remorse, we may not, we dare not expect, that the dayspring from on high will visit us, in that love of God on earth which may be considered as the foretaste of the holiness and happiness of heaven. To this it is our high privilege to aspire; this is the point to which, in our spiritual progress, all our efforts should be directed, the perception in the secret mind, of a sincere and unfeigned love of God, as *our reconciled Father in Christ Jesus*.

But I hasten to consider the practical effect of the love of God, “shed abroad in the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost,” and to show that, even here, it is its own exceeding great reward.

It is, my brethren, the sole unfailing support, under the sorrows and trials of life: the only staff, on which we can lean, with full assurance of support under every difficulty and danger. Friends

may desert us, or be snatched away; but God is an everlasting and unchanging friend; our dearest hopes and wishes may be disappointed; our affections blighted; our worldly prospects, darkened (it may be, it often is His will, so to try and prove us, that He may know whether we are wholly His); yet the faithful conviction of the love of God towards us, and the blessed consciousness, that our afflictions are beginning to rest upon Him, as their just and proper object, will soothe, even in moments of bitterest sorrow, and mould our affections and feelings, till they shall have assumed one uniform tone (perhaps the highest degree of perfection attainable here), that of uncomplaining, satisfied, and perfect resignation to His Holy Will, amid all the changes and chances of this mortal life.

And this alone would be a sufficient inducement to cultivate the great principle of the love of God, but considering ourselves, merely as "strangers and pilgrims upon earth¹," who are journeying towards, and looking for a better country, there is a far greater blessing, which awaits us, when we have succeeded in giving unto God our whole heart. It is, I will not say the only, but certainly the most convincing evidence, that the good seed has taken root, and is bearing

¹ Heb. ii. 13.

precious fruit, in the *formation of a character fitted for heaven.*

God being the great object of our love, and heaven the point on which all our hopes and wishes should be placed, we cannot, as reasonable beings, over-estimate the importance of cultivating that character, which may fit us for the presence of the one, and the enjoyment of the other. This character is peculiar and distinctive; it holds no fellowship with the maxims and opinions of the world; it does not rest upon outward decency of conduct, it is not *conclusively* evidenced by any external indication; its principles are of an higher order, its motives exhibit holier tendencies; for it looks to the praise of God as its object, and aspires to the imitation of His purity and holiness. Purity of motive, sincerity of purpose, perfect truthfulness in thought, word, and deed, inward cleansing and sanctification of the heart and affections, desires and hopes which rest on heaven, these are the signs which mark the growth of grace in the Christian heart; which the world sees not, which are often known only to God and ourselves, and which He will bless with an increasing measure of His grace, till the whole spirit, soul, and body of the believer, be fitted to enter upon its eternal and heavenly inheritance.

Search then your hearts, my brethren, for these testimonies to the sincerity of your Christian

profession ; be not satisfied to lead the life of the natural man, with tempers and dispositions, which if not openly opposed to and habitually violating the law of God, are yet unchanged and unrenewed by His Spirit, and bear no impress of the peculiar features of your high and holy calling. Search your hearts for the progressive character of your feelings, see whether your affections are becoming more spiritual, more prepared for a communion with the Blessed, for the society of angels, for the presence of the Most High God. Remember that the character must be commenced here, which will be perfected hereafter ; that the happiness of heaven, could neither be appreciated nor enjoyed by those, who pass into the eternal world, with hearts which respond only to, and sympathize with earthly objects ; that none but the holy, can enter into the presence of the pure and holy God.

The formation of this character, according as God has given unto each the measure of His grace, is the great and real labour of life. To this object, all the dispensations of God's providence, His mercies and His chastisements are directed ; it is the end, the glory of the Gospel, to sow in the heart of man, the seed that springeth up to everlasting life ; the motives, principles, and feelings, suited to, and capable of eternal happiness. And blessed, beyond all that thought can conceive or tongue can tell, are those happy souls,

who are thus living, not for time, but for eternity, not unto the world, but unto God. Theirs is the peace, which is not of this world, but “cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning¹,” theirs is the deep repose of hearts, that have sought and found their eternal treasure; theirs is the life so touchingly expressed by the Apostle, “as hid with Christ in God²;” theirs is the love, which has begun “to cast out fear,” and dwelling upon His mercies, with hearts more and more deeply imbued with the sense of His unspeakable love to man, they truly feel, that “this God is our God for ever and ever, He will be our guide unto death.”

Carry then your thoughts a little further, and imagine the death-bed of him, who has known and loved God, as *his reconciled Father in Christ Jesus*: think of the holy calm, the unspeakable blessedness of that hour, when, in his last and severest trial, the dying Christian can sincerely say, “My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God, when shall I come to appear before the presence of God³.”

I have selected “the first and great commandment,” as the subject of the last discourse which I shall ever address to you as your appointed minister; I have endeavoured to show, that to

¹ James i. 17.

² Col. iii. 3.

³ Ps. xlii. 2.

“love God with all our hearts, with all our soul, and with all our mind,” is a duty, to which we are gently constrained by a sense of His infinite love to ourselves; and I desire now to close my pastoral office amongst you, by calling on you, to give unto God your whole hearts. Strive to regard Him with feelings suited to the members of that covenant whereby you are privileged to “cry Abba Father:” consider the Gospel as one simple and uniform appeal to your affections; one gracious and earnest invitation to “love Him who has first loved you.” Carry with you, into the labours and duties of daily life, the sanctifying recollection, that you are the redeemed by the blood of Christ, the children of grace, the heirs of the promised inheritance. And while you think upon all that He hath done for your souls, pray that you “may be rooted and grounded in love¹,” pray that the Holy Spirit will implant and strengthen in you the only principle which can produce a cheerful, uniform, and consistent obedience, the *faith that worketh by love*; till some portion of that “mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus²,” and you are fitted, through His merits, and the mercy of a pardoning God, for “the inheritance of the saints in light.”

And now, brethren, farewell; accept my earnest

¹ Eph. iii. 17.

² Gal. v. 6.

prayers for your future and eternal happiness, in the words of that Church, which will ever, I trust, be interwoven with your dearest and holiest affections. I pray that "God will defend you with His heavenly grace, that you may continue His for ever, and daily increase in His holy Spirit, more and more, until you come unto His everlasting kingdom¹." Amen.

¹ Confirmation Service.

THE END.

7
THE MINISTERIAL TRUST.

—
A

S E R M O N ,

**PREACHED IN THE
PARISH CHURCH OF SITTINGBOURNE,
AT THE ORDINARY VISITATION
OF THE
LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,
ON WEDNESDAY, THE 31st OF AUGUST, 1836.**

—
**BY THE
REV. JOHN BARTON, M.A.
RECTOR OF EASTCHURCH.**

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**PUBLISHED BY COMMAND OF HIS GRACE THE
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FAITHFUL SERVANT,
JOHN BARTON.

*Eastchurch Rectory,
September 1st, 1836.*

S E R M O N .

I TIMOTHY vi. 20.

O TIMOTHY, KEEP THAT WHICH IS COMMITTED TO
THY TRUST, AVOIDING PROFANE AND VAIN
BABBLINGS, AND OPPOSITIONS OF SCIENCE
FALSELY SO CALLED.

THE Apostle, impressed with the various trials and perils which surrounded "his own son in the faith,"¹ solemnly charged him in this chapter, as "in the sight of God," "to keep the commandment," or the trust committed to him, without spot of neglect or unfaithfulness. Snares and allurements were not wanting to seduce him from the simplicity of the faith, therefore he is warned to withdraw from those who corrupted the wholesome doctrine of Christ, and made it the subject of strife, debate, and controversy. False teachers had risen up, artfully substituting a vain philosophy in place of the pure and self-denying precepts of the gospel of Christ. Thus speculations were early introduced into christianity,

¹ I Tim. i. 2.

to render it more congenial to the heart of man, and to gratify the pride of intellect; into which absurdities some having been seduced, had “*erred concerning the faith.*” Under such circumstances, the great apostle exhorts his beloved Timothy to “*keep that which is committed to his trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.*”

Called upon to address you, my reverend brethren, on the present occasion, I have selected the words of the text, as suggesting some useful reflections, which, under the divine blessing, may be profitable to ourselves at a period pregnant with important consequences to “*pure and undefiled religion.*” Deeply conscious of my own incompetency at such a season for the duty assigned to me, bear with me, and deem me not presumptuous, if I endeavour to excite increased faithfulness and zeal in that holy trust, to which our lives have been consecrated. May our present meeting be a gracious means of comfort and encouragement, that refreshed by the counsel and assistance of our most Reverend Diocesan, we may return with renewed vigour and earnestness to our respective charges; and may a large measure of God’s Holy Spirit rest upon us, that we may become more and “*more able ministers of the New Testament,*”² “*declaring*” unto the people “*the whole counsel of God.*”³

² II Cor. iii. 6.

³ Acts xx. 27.

I. "*O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust.*" It has been remarked, that were an angel to descend from heaven to earth in the service of God, the lowliest office in which his ministration could be exercised, would be accounted honourable and delightful. If an angelic nature, then, would regard itself ennobled by being employed as a fellow-worker with God, surely it is a momentous trust, a high and exalted privilege for any of the fallen sons of Adam to be called to advance the honour of God, to be entrusted with the charge of immortal souls, and to preach among sinners "the unsearchable riches"⁴ of a Saviour's love and wisdom. It is the work and calling in which our Lord himself was delighted to labour, during the last years of his abode upon earth, and which he appointed, as the channel of communicating the revelation of his will, to the end of time. Before his ascension He invested the apostles with power to settle and govern the Church, and to order all things necessary for the establishment of his kingdom upon earth : therein giving perpetuity to that constitution, by which the gifts of the spirit should be distributed by ordained ministers to succeeding generations. "As the father hath sent me, even so send I you."⁵ And, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."⁶

It is, then, by the authority of Him, who is the supreme

⁴ Ephes. iii. 8.

⁵ John xx. 21,

⁶ Matt. xxviii. 20.

Head of the Church, that men are called to this holy work, under his guidance, and the promise of all needful supplies of grace. What encouragement is here supplied to contend with every difficulty, to labour with undaunted perseverance in promoting the salvation of man, and the glory of God.

The ordinary exercise of the Ministerial Trust, doubtless, consists in recommending, explaining, and enforcing the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, by the soundness of our public and private exhortations, and by the pure christian example of our lives. But, my reverend brethren, seasons will occur in which something more may be required of us ; in which we may be called to defend the truth and reasonableness of the principles which the gospel inculcates, or to assert the immovable foundation upon which it stands. For religion itself, though in its origin divine, and in its object immutable, yet dwelling among sinful men, must partake in a degree of those vicissitudes which are common to human affairs. It has its periods of life and darkness, of empire and subjection ; at one time it glows with all the lustre becoming its heavenly origin, at another is clouded by superstitions unworthy of the rational beings with whom it resides ; it now governs the minds of men with absolute authority, and now finds itself reduced to struggle for existence—its authenticity questioned, its saving doctrines denied, and its heavenly precepts scorred.

Which of these characters we ought to assign to the present times, it can require but little consideration to determine. The church of Christ, always militant in this world, is peculiarly so at the present period ; especially that Apostolical branch with which we are connected. Its ministers, therefore, will do well to consider that which is "*committed to their trust*," and "*contend earnestly for the faith, once delivered unto the saints.*"⁷ They will uphold in all their scriptural purity the great and fundamental doctrines of the church, "*not handling the word of God deceitfully ; but by manifestation of the truth commending themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God :*"⁸ with meekness, but with uncompromising firmness—withstanding the violence of enemies, defeating their stratagems, and exposing their evil designs. The recollection of the Master they serve will supply a constraining motive to exertion, and prevent all feelings of despondency under those vicissitudes and dangers which have befallen the cause of truth.

The injunction to keep that which is "*committed to our trust*," requires, in these degenerate days, unceasing care and vigilance in detecting and counteracting the insidious efforts of Infidelity, whether presented under the bold front of Atheism, or in the more plausible garb of the Deist. These enemies, however, are to be dreaded not so

⁷ Jude iii.

⁸ II Cor. iv. 2.

much on account of the force with which they are directed, as of the objects against which they are aimed.

It is not the rich and the luxurious, the idle and the vain alone, that they endeavour to blind to the hopes of future happiness, and the terrors of future judgment. Their strenuous endeavours are rather turned against those, who, walking in the humbler class of life, are more easily imposed upon by their fatal sophistry. Their malicious artifices are contrived to rob the poor man of his only riches, to bereave the ignorant of his only wisdom, and to cut off from him that is of low estate in the eyes of men, all the means of exaltation and favour in the sight of God.

The preservation of our people from schism, and the maintenance of christian unity form an essential part of the Ministerial Trust, and impose the necessity of guarding against the introduction of heresies and corruptions which deny the leading doctrines of our religion, and impugn the authority and arraign the discipline of the Established Church. Wherever any of these "perverse disputings,"⁹ which "minister questions rather than godly edifying, which is in faith,"¹ have gained admission, experience has taught us to estimate the consequences that ensue. Some men will be found to embrace the most depraved and pernicious doctrines; others will be distracted and

⁹ I Tim. vi. 5.

¹ I Tim. i. 4.

perplexed amidst variety by the difficulty of choice, "being like children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine."² Many will become suspicious and doubtful, conceiving that where there is so much difference of opinion, there can be little truth: while others, again, will adhere to their faith, not from preference, but from obstinacy; not from conviction, but from carelessness. Thus the worship of the Church becomes neglected, the admonitions of her ministers scorned, and their persons exposed to contempt. The most uneducated and ignorant inflated with self sufficiency, pronounce with rash decision on subjects far above their reach, on the credibility of controverted facts, on the mysteries of grace, or the decrees of Providence. I mean not to apply these remarks to the conscientious Dissenter, for I believe that among that body, there are many holy, useful, and excellent men, whose services are directed to the furtherance of God's truth: it is not against men, but against principles that we speak. Some there are, who cannot conscientiously join with us, who claim our forbearance to a certain extent, but whose scruples, nevertheless, we must regard as those of a sickly conscience: but others there are of the present day, who seek openly and avowedly the destruction of our Church Establishment. Under the specious name of Dissent, is too often masked the real

² Ephes. iv. 14.

disciple of Infidelity, or the political Agitator, the better to engage the attention, and elude the vigilance of the Christian; well knowing, if they can but once unsettle the mind of man in its religious principles, how easy it is, by the continual application of fresh impulse, to keep it in motion, till it shall arrive at the desired point of unbelief. They are well aware that the faith, which stands not secure on the basis of the Church of England, will never safely repose on any other.

With such a combination of enemies against us, using various weapons and various modes of warfare, it might be the advice of prudence to retire from the conflict, were we left to our own exertions without the support of some powerful ally. But here we feel our strength. We trust that if our eyes were opened like those of Elisha's servant, we should see like him, that "they that be with us, are more than they that be with them."³ We trust that God, who "in the days of our fathers, and in the old times that were before them," hath done so great things for our religion and our church, will not forsake us at this eventful crisis, but will finally deliver us from present trial, to an increase of strength and glory. While encouraged by this high and animating confidence in the Lord of Hosts, we must not relax into supineness or inactivity. Religion being committed to human beings,

³ II Kings, vi. 16.

must in some degree be protected by human care: and here we have deep cause for praise and gratitude to God, for those means of defence which the labours of pious and learned men have so amply provided against the exigence of the times. We have still the word of inspiration unmutilated and entire in our hands; the works of many fathers of the primitive church have descended to our times, and the labours of other great divines and scholars of our church—men who were endued with a measure of wisdom from God, which we do not discover in the meagre productions of those who would remodel the work of these spiritual giants. Here, then, we have an armoury from which we may draw whatever is fit for our own use, whatever is necessary for the conflict in which we are engaged. Here we shall still find that “shield of faith,” which has so often “quenched all the fiery darts of the wicked,”⁴ and that “sword of the spirit,” which, with unabated keenness, has so often pierced the thickest armour of infidelity.

II. Let us now consider the caution conveyed in the latter part of the text, as applicable to our times and circumstances: “*avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.*” Many false maxims and opinions prevail at this day, predisposing the minds of men to the reception of error,

⁴ Ephes. vi. 16.

disguised under the appearance of novelty and philosophical discovery. The term Philosophy is now familiar in the mouth of the most unlettered part of the community, who are taught to set an high, though undefined value on all that comes recommended under that imposing appellation; while the most lavish praises are bestowed upon the advocates of philosophy and science, sacred truth is degraded to a subordinate place in the minds of men, and the labours of those who unfold the counsels of God, are viewed as of inferior value. The truths of philosophy and politics are more regarded than the truths of religion. Not a month, not a week passes, but some trivial pamphlet is produced to disseminate the light of knowledge, which contains arguments or insinuations hostile to true religion. To a system of mental cultivation, independent of and degrading to religion, upheld by the advocates of vain philosophy, we shall, as messengers of the Lord, offer a calm but firm resistance, by inculcating the pure and humiliating doctrines of scripture. In opposition to that pride of reason which would extol the dignity of human nature, we shall declare that the "carnal mind is enmity against God,"⁵ that "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked:"⁶ that all the world is guilty before God: we shall teach the depraved and fallen nature of man, "casting down"

⁵ Rom. vii. 8.

⁶ Jer. xvii. 9.

vain "imagination and every high thing that exalteth itself against God :'" and we shall proclaim the remedy provided for perishing sinners, that they may awake and seek salvation where alone it is to be found.

It is not to Philosophy properly so called that we object, but against the modern semblance of her that we must assert the holy claims of gospel truth. In times of old, when she dwelt with Socrates, she called off his attention from useless inquiries and perplexing subtleties, to fix it on real life and moral knowledge. From the consideration of his own ignorance, she taught him the duty of humility ; and while she shewed him the weakness of human reason, she enforced the necessity of divine revelation. It is not, then, that sound Philosophy is the friend of infidelity and error, or that she has changed her nature, but that which, in these days of rebuke and blasphemy, has usurped her name and station, and is "*falsely so called.*" Reversing the instructions of the Athenian sage, her whole endeavour is to turn the thoughts of men from the humility which he recommended and practised, to the empty arrogance of the sophists, whom he refuted and depised ; from the saving knowledge of the everlasting gospel, which he would have embraced with adoring gratitude, to the gloomy ignorance of unassisted nature, from which he so ardently desired to escape.

⁷ II Cor. x. 5.

To this pernicious source may be referred a mistaken notion which tends greatly to increase the errors of the age, as it flatters its vanity by extolling its wisdom at the expense of former times. When men are daily told how much they exceed their ancestors in intellectual knowledge, they are more easily inclined to listen to insinuations unfavourable to the religious doctrines they have received from their forefathers, and are often persuaded to dismiss all those principles, which pious but credulous men in their ignorance or bigotry professed, as unworthy of these days of illumination and philosophy. Science, arts, and politics, it must be admitted, are pursued at this day with avidity in every circle of life, and the light of knowledge is more extensively diffused than at any former period. But, amidst this mighty stir of intellect, are men equally conversant with religion. It is indeed true, notwithstanding the infidelity and philosophy that prevail, there are those in every rank, and in every part of our land, who know "the gospel to be the power of God unto salvation;"^s but do men in general display the same eagerness, the same energy to obtain that light and knowledge which are connected with the only true happiness. We fear it is far otherwise, for the effects that should follow these sublime exercises of the soul are not commonly seen among us. Oh! that men would consider: that they

^s Rom. i. 16.

would make a proper use of knowledge, to secure their spiritual and eternal welfare. The common multitude are invited to explore the mysteries of science ; but how small the number who care about religion, how many who oppose and corrupt it. Education, indeed, is declared to be a thing more for the mind than the soul ; and a mischievous spirit of conciliation and expedience, would withhold from the schools of the poor, the entire book of light and life, “ whose author is God, and whose subject is salvation.” The welfare of man depends upon the inculcation of sound religious principle, which cannot be acquired by withholding any part of revealed truth. Such a system is a departure from the principle on which the national and protestant faith is founded, that “ the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of protestants.” It is a device of infidelity and popery, aided by all the other restless elements of evil, for lessening the influence and working the overthrow of the National Church. It surely becomes all who love the “ truth as it is in Jesus,”⁹ all who would preserve that great charter of religious liberty, the right of the people to “ search the scriptures,”¹ to gather round her as “ fellow helpers to the truth,”² to strengthen her in this hour of peril.

Another notion too industriously propagated is, that men have a right to judge for themselves in all religious

⁹ Ephes. iv. 21.

¹ John v. 39.

² III John viii.

concerns; that it is of little consequence what their religion is, so that they are but sincere in the profession of it. This notion however erroneous, is yet more dangerous, both as it appeals to that specious liberality which marks the weakness of modern refinement, and as it appears to set no more than a just value on one of the most amiable qualities of the human heart. But liberality in its true sense, consists not in confounding truth and falsehood, but in accurately distinguishing between them, and giving the preference where it is due, uninfluenced by prejudice. The sincerity or hypocrisy of professors of religion, cannot possibly have any influence on what stands solely upon the word and purpose of God. The Jewish religion was not less true and holy, because the Pharisees were hypocrites, neither was Paganism less false and impious, because it was sincerely believed by many of its votaries. Truth is the essence of religion. It is truth alone that can give validity and effect to the great charter of salvation. While then we meekly "instruct those that oppose themselves,"³ we shall not shrink from protesting against "*profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called;*" but rather direct them to the word of God, the only unerring guide, and read there, that there is "no other name under heaven given among men whereby they may be saved,"⁴

³ II Tim. ii. 25.

⁴ Acts iv. 12.

but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ ; or again, that awful denunciation, "whosoever believeth and is baptized, shall be saved ; but whosoever believeth not, shall be damned."⁵

The exhibition of these subtle opinions and vain disputings, summon us to exercise our best powers, in developing their fatal tendency ; and not only these, but the extraordinary activity and zeal, with which the flagrant and soul destroying errors of the Church of Rome are propagated at this day, render it imperative upon the servants of Christ, to warn their flocks, that they be not drawn aside from the simplicity of the gospel, by the wily insinuations of sophistry, or be imposed upon by the lofty pretensions of human tradition. The progress of this subtle enemy, and the unexampled efforts she is making to proselyte to her communion, cannot be questioned : neither can it be regarded without apprehension, that this progress is aided unhappily, by men of influence and power, who, blinded by the liberalism of the day, would insinuate that her condition is improved, and her sentiments modified. It is, then, incumbent upon us, yea, necessity is laid upon us, in the faithful discharge of our trust, to expose the essential difference between the erroneous principles and idolatrous rites of the Church of Rome, and the simple truth in Jesus, as embodied in the

⁵ Mark xvi. 16.

tenets and formularies of our own Church. Upon the word of God, we shall fearlessly take our stand, teaching men to reject "any doctrine that is not contained therein, nor can be proved thereby."

In apostolic days, before this "mystery of iniquity"⁶ began to work, Timothy was specially instructed in its features, that he might instil into the minds of the people a proper caution, not to be led away by its appearance. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained."⁷

Among the prevailing errors of the day, it is painful to allude to that extravagant spirit of Enthusiasm which has weaned some of our weaker brethren from the Church,

⁶ II Thess. ii. 7.

⁷ I Tim. iv. 1.

whose aim it is to have a perfect church before God will have it : because some abuses exist within our pale, and supposing themselves to be gifted with some extraordinary and miraculous powers, they speak to us under this delusion to give up the National Church ; telling us that the bride is to prepare for Christ, and they separate from us because we will not follow them in their unscriptural and dangerous pretensions. “ God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”⁸ He can overrule the perversions of our misguided brethren, and the designs of enemies, to work together for good.

It becomes us, therefore, as stewards of the divine mysteries, to consider what is committed to our charge, and the solemn question that arises and remains. Are we, at this peculiar season, faithful to our trust ? Do we preach in sincerity and truth the sacred message of eternal salvation, which we are sent to deliver ; or, departing from the purity of those doctrines, which our martyred reformers sealed with the testimony of their blood, are we induced by the adoption of novel and strange views, to suppress “ the truth as it is in Jesus,”⁹ to conceal or pervert it ? There is unhappily, in this restless age, a tendency to diverge from a right apprehension of divine things, and to wander into the region of refined and metaphysical abstractions. But woe unto us, brethren,

⁸ I Cor. xiv. 33.

⁹ Ephes. iv. 21.

if, while indulging in any roving speculations which obscure the sacred light of scripture, we render that enigmatical and unintelligible, which ought to be made level to the meanest capacity : if, while seeking to refine the declarations of the Bible beyond their plain and unforced meaning, we lead believers astray from " the old paths, where is the good way in which they may find rest for their souls."¹ " Yea, woe unto us if we preach not the Gospel ;"² for otherwise we are lost, lost for ever. " The truth is not in us,"³ and we must perish together with the Father of lies, in the deceits which we have received from him. The call is loud and imperative upon us, faithfully to maintain the doctrines of the " gospel of the grace of God"⁴ in all their purity, according to our scriptural articles and homilies : to be true to those solemn vows by which, at our Ordination, we pledged ourselves, " the Lord being our helper, to be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word."⁵

" As we are allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel," so we shall desire to " speak not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth the hearts."⁶ Under a sense of this awful responsibility, we shall oppose our endeavours, which, though feeble in themselves, may be mighty

¹ Jer. vi. 16. ² I Cor. ix. 16. ³ I John . 8. ⁴ Acts x. 14.

⁵ Ordination Service.

⁶ I Thess. ii. 4.

through Him that strengtheneth us, to the Infidelity, the false Philosophy, the Errors, and the Enthusiasm of the day. We shall, as far as we ought, accommodate our duty to the fluctuating principles, temper, and wants of mankind, as true sons of the Church. Yet amidst these employments, which the necessity of the times calls forth, the great and ordinary duties of our trust must not be forgotten. No labour or diligence in one part of our duty can atone for the neglect or omission of another. Those subjects which now unhappily demand a large portion of our attention, we trust may be only temporary ; whereas, those which are of the highest, are also of continual and universal importance ; they press upon us at all times, and under all circumstances. “ These, then, we ought to do, and not leave the other undone.”

What the result of the present crisis may be, or to what further trial our holy faith may be exposed, it is impossible to conjecture. It is undeniable that we are at the commencement of a series of experiments, which may end in results most tremendous and disastrous to true religion. The violence of party, the malice of enemies, the temporizing spirit and fancied theories of influential men, may entail unnumbered evils on our scriptural Church, and pour contempt upon the doctrine and “ faith once delivered unto the saints.”⁷ Let our chief consolation

⁷ Jude iii.

be, that "the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth,"⁸ and that His "counsel shall stand."⁹ As ministers of Christ, as those who are called to speak boldly for Him, and the spiritual interest of his kingdom, we shall meekly, but firmly, resist every encroachment, every innovation which threaten the doctrines and the existence of our Established Church. Trial and persecution are the heritage of the household of Christ, perhaps it is needful for our purification that we suffer : hatred, enmity, and opposition assail us on every side. Yet God can cause good to spring out of evil. He can make affliction the corrective of error. Let us take comfort from the words of Christ himself, "blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake."¹ Let us be much in prayer, that God would avert all menacing dangers from us ; that he "would be merciful unto us and bless us, and shew us the light of his countenance,"² That "He would raise up, as defenders of the national faith, men of ability and constancy, and piety, suited to the emergence of the times. That He would dispose our Sovereign and Senators to establish our institutions 'only on the best and surest foundations,' those of gratitude for His favour, allegiance to His laws, and zeal for His glory."³ That he would diffuse among all

⁸ Rev. xix. 6. ⁹ Isaiah xli. 10. ¹ Matt. v. 11. ² Psalm lxvii. 1.

³ Allen's Lectures in Defence of the Church of England. p. 364.

the people, a spirit of holy caution against "all false doctrine, heresy, and schism, that the eternal Spirit may lead them into all truth, and guide them by his counsel, that they may be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."⁴ Thus, brethren, let us seek and trust in the Lord Jehovah, the Eternal Rock of Israel.

Finally, let us implore Him to direct the energies and strengthen the hands of the Chief Pastors of the Church, that they may correct what is amiss, repair what is decayed, cleanse what is corrupt, that our National Zion may emerge from the present ordeal with renewed strength and beauty; preserved in knowledge and faith, in unity and peace, in purity and holiness, and "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."⁵

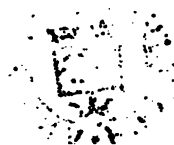
"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. *Amen.*"⁶

⁴ I Peter i. 5.

⁵ Coloss. iv. 12.

⁶ Ephes. iii. 20.

F I N I S .



**THE CLAIM OF DESTITUTE CLERGYMEN TO
ASSISTANCE.**

A SERMON,

PREACHED

IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF SALISBURY,

ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 9, 1836,

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE

CHURCH UNION SOCIETY,

IN THE DIOCESE OF SALISBURY.

BY THE VEN. EDWARD BERENS,

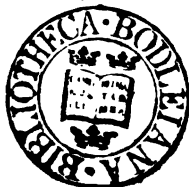
ARCHDEACON OF BERKS, AND PREBENDARY OF SARUM.

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**SOLD ALSO BY MESSRS. C. J. AND F. RIVINGTON, ST. PAUL'S
CHURCH-YARD, LONDON.**



TO

THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY,

PATRON,

THE VERY REVEREND THE DEAN OF SALISBURY,

PRESIDENT,

AND

THE RURAL DEANS,

WHO WERE PRESENT AT THE ANNUAL MEETING, 1886.

THE FOLLOWING

S E R M O N,

PRINTED AT THEIR REQUEST,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

A SERMON.

ROMANS XV. 27.

“It hath pleased them verily ; and their debtors they are.
For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their
spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them
in carnal things.”

Not only in the Epistle from which the text is taken, but also in both of those which were addressed to the Church at Corinth, St. Paul speaks of the contributions which were made among the Gentile converts to Christianity for the relief of the urgent necessities of their poor brethren at Jerusalem. In the latter of these Epistles, almost two entire chapters are devoted to this subject.*

The comparatively poor constitute the majority of all nations ; and in a still larger proportion did the majority of the first converts to

2 Cor. viii. ix.

the religion of Jesus consist of the poor. The upper classes, from education, from habit, and from various prejudices, were naturally backward to embrace what they considered as a new religion ; and from a variety of personal feelings, from views of self-interest, and from pride, they were little disposed to give a favourable hearing to the humiliating doctrines of the Gospel. Accordingly, speaking with reference to the first preaching of Christianity, St. Paul had reason to observe, that “not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, were called.*

And if this was the case with the world in general, it was more especially the case with the Jews, who, in addition to the feelings of pride and worldly self-interest by which they were actuated in common with the higher ranks among other nations, were rendered averse from embracing the Gospel by their attachment to the Mosaic law and ritual, and by their tenacious adherence to the traditions and customs of their forefathers. It was accordingly among the poor—among men comparatively unshackled by worldly pride, and worldly interests, and by national prejudices,—that the preaching of Christ and his Apos-

1 Cor. i. 26.

ties met with the most ready acceptance. As our Lord said that he came to preach the Gospel to the poor—the poor in spirit and the poor in worldly circumstances—so we are told that the poor gave ready attention to his teaching,—“ the common people heard him gladly.”* Those of superior rank, who were in their hearts disposed to assent to his divine doctrine, were withheld from openly professing their inward conviction by apprehension of the consequences to which such professions might expose them : they were disciples, but *secretly*, for fear of the Jews. So few and so secret were they, that the opposers of the Gospel might well ask—as if appealing to a known and acknowledged fact—“ have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him ?” †

The consequence was, that when, after the Ascension of our Lord, his Church first began to assume form and consistency, the multitude of them that believed were, generally speaking, men in poor and abject circumstances. The few who were possessed of any property—in the fulness of their zeal and christian benevolence—quickly reduced themselves to the same low state of poverty with the rest of their Christian brethren. “ As many

* Mark xii. 37.

† John vii. 48.

as were possessed of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles' feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." *

It was in the nature of things, that the funds thus spontaneously supplied should be in a short time exhausted, and that the early Christians at Jerusalem should be reduced to a state of comparative destitution. For the supply—the relief—of such destitution, St. Paul felt no hesitation in availing himself of the assistance of the Churches, which had been established among the Gentiles. With this view he mentions particularly the Churches of Galatia and Macedonia, the wealthy city of Corinth the capital of Achaia, and Rome the queen,—“the *crowning* city”†—of the greater part of the world at that time known. This assistance, he well knew, they would contribute, both from good will,—from a feeling of real brotherly kindness,—and also as a matter of justice,—of debt. “It hath pleased them verily, and their debtors they are.” “It has pleased them,”—*they took pleasure* in thus contributing to the wants of their Christian brethren at Jerusalem,—“and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made

* Acts iv. 34—35.

† Isaiah xxiii. 8.

partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things." It was from the Jews that the Gentiles had received the knowledge of Christianity. The Jews were early chosen by God as his peculiar people, to be the depository, the conservators, of the only true religion. To the Jews "pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; theirs were the fathers, and of them as concerning the flesh Christ came."* And, as our Lord was by birth a Jew, so it was among the Jews that his ministry of mercy was fulfilled. It was from the Jews that he selected the men who were first to make known the glad tidings of salvation, the first heralds of the Gospel of peace, who were sent forth to make God's ways known upon earth, his saving health among all nations. "Out of Zion went forth both the law" and the Gospel, "and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."† In return for these transcendent blessings, "*these spiritual things*," it was but fair and equitable,—it was a debt, not only of gratitude, but of common justice, that the Gentiles should make such return as was in their power; that they should willingly communicate "their carnal things,"

* Rom. ix. 4—5.

† Micah iv. 2.

—should contribute some portion of their worldly substance to the relief of the poor Christians at Jerusalem.

But though such be the plain and obvious meaning of the passage which I have selected as my text,—so plain and obvious indeed, that I have, perhaps, been guilty of a culpable trespass on your time and attention by thus dwelling upon it,—yet is this passage also susceptible of a more extensive application. Certainly, it may fitly be applied to the purpose of setting forth the duty of the laity to relieve the wants, to minister to the necessities of those from whom they receive spiritual things, those from whom they receive instruction in righteousness, and the due performance of the offices of religion.* In this sense, this passage is, I think, strictly applicable to the benevolent object which has this day assembled us in the house of God. I need not remind you that, next to its *general* object,—the promotion of Union among members of the Church,—the chief objects of the institution, the cause of which I have been requested to plead, are, “to afford to superannuated Curates the means of retiring from duties, to which they are no longer equal ; to enable aged and infirm Incumbents of small incomes, to pro-

* 1 Cor. ix. See the whole Chapter.

vide an assistant Curate ; and, indeed, to give occasional assistance to ministers of the Church in peculiar circumstances of destitution and distress." You are aware that a rule is added, " that no Incumbent or Curate shall be deemed an object of the charity, whose income, from whatever source derived, shall exceed the sum one hundred and fifty pounds per annum." It is obvious, as the report very properly suggests, that in all cases of infirm Curates or Incumbents the relief intended, will, in fact, operate for the benefit of the parishes, which are suffering from duties inadequately performed.

This short and simple statement of the main objects of this Society, will of itself be sufficient, I trust, to ensure the zealous co-operation of all who hear me. Few are ignorant how very large a proportion of our parochial benefices, notwithstanding the long-continued operation of Queen Anne's bounty, are still utterly inadequate to the maintenance of an Incumbent. The successive ecclesiastical reports, which have recently been made public, have done much to correct the exaggerated notions which prevailed respecting the amount of ecclesiastical income. Little more than ten years ago it was stated, as the result of a cautious, and apparently accurate inves-

tigation, that there were then more than three thousand parochial benefices, with an income each not exceeding 98*l.* per annum.* From one of the reports submitted to the legislature in the present year, it appears, that there are more than 1400 benefices with a population each of 500 and upwards, and under 150*l.* per annum. Those with a smaller population are not taken into the account; but of these the number is, I believe, still larger. At the time to which I have alluded there were, it seems, more than 1000 livings under 60*l.*, and 422 under 30*l.*

Figure to yourselves the situation of a clergyman, unprovided with any private resources of his own, and placed in one of these poorly-endowed benefices; figure to yourselves his painful and depressing feelings, when his natural powers are enfeebled either by lingering sickness, or by the gradual but resistless approaches of old age. When in full vigour of mind and body, he perhaps put forth all his energy in order that he might make full proof of his ministry, and be instrumental, through the Divine blessing, in bringing into the fold of Christ, those who hitherto had been held in captivity by the God of this world. Even then, probably, he was not able alto-

* Dr. Yates.

gether to prevent some members of his flock from straying. Some perhaps have been offended by the plainness of his pastoral admonitions and reproofs; others have taken umbrage at some little unintentional oversight: some, having itching ears, have been seduced from his ministry by the fascination of extemporaneous volubility, and others by the mere love of novelty, being, like the Athenians of old, intent, above all things, upon hearing some new thing. What, then, will be the falling away, when both mind and body are enfeebled! When he feels within himself those symptoms of advancing years, which are so poetically expressed by Solomon in his portraiture of old age,—in the day, “when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders shall cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened;”^{*}—in other words, when the intellectual powers shall have become weak and wavering, when the muscular force is broken and debilitated, when the articulation is impaired by the loss of some of its organs, and the eye-sight has become dim and imperfect, all his pastoral ministrations must naturally lose much of their efficiency. His

^{*} Eccles. xii. 3.

public offices especially are little likely to be attractive, when he can scarcely make himself heard. All this he feels most painfully, and deeply laments. But how can the evil be remedied? How shall he supplied this lack of service? Of funds, with which he might procure the aid of a younger brother in the ministry, he is utterly destitute. Hitherto, by watchful economy, and rigid self-denial, he has endeavoured so far to comply with the apostolical precept, as to "owe no man any thing," but the still accruing, still unliquidated debt of kindness and good will. Hitherto he has contrived to accomplish this, though perhaps aware, that she, the wife of his bosom, the sharer through many long years of all his joys and all his sorrows, who has entered with affectionate interest into all the encouragements, and into all the mortifications and anxieties which have attended his ministry, was submitting in secrecy and in silence to privations hard to be endured,—hard to be endured at any time, but then especially when infirmity and decrepitude might fairly claim some little additional comforts and accommodations. Cheered, indeed, he is by the faith and by the hope of a Christian; but so far as relates to this world only, the way before him is dark, and bleak, and dreary, and he sees

that the sad remainder of his pilgrimage must be travelled in weariness and painfulness; almost without earthly consolation—almost without earthly hope. If in these depressing circumstances your Society approaches him with the proffer of gratuitous assistance, and tells him that all the Church ministrations, to which he is no longer equal, shall, under his direction and control, be efficiently fulfilled, how will his mind be relieved and his spirits cheered! Surely the grateful feelings of his heart will be opened, and “so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.”*

Or, to advert to another instance of distress in which relief is given by this Society. How many are the Ministers of the Gospel, who, though not enfeebled either by sickness or advancing years, yet feel their energies checked, their activity impeded, their usefulness lessened, themselves in every way fettered and bowed down, by the narrowness of their income! They see their families—their wives and their children—in danger of wanting—often wanting *actually*—not only the comforts, but the merest necessities of life. They feel themselves descending, to-

1 Cor. xiv. 25.

B

gether with them, in the scale of society, and sinking gradually, without remedy or hope, into the lowest depths of abject pauperism ;—pauperism at all times grievous to be borne, but especially by those who have known better days, and who, by their education, by their habits, and their early associations, have been but ill prepared—ill trained—to encounter it. When in such circumstances pecuniary assistance is judiciously and kindly tendered, great indeed is the relief which is oftentimes felt. The spirits of the dejected servant of the altar are refreshed and revived, as the parched herbage is revived by a genial shower, or as the traveller through the sandy waste is refreshed by “the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” *

It is, however, quite unnecessary to suppose imaginary cases. Instances of such distress may be found in every county and Diocese. Indeed, we may take the simple statement of the Report of the year before last. A Benefaction was then granted to the Perpetual Curate of a village in Berkshire, containing upwards of 500 souls. “He performs,” says the Report, “two services on the Sabbath—has no private property—a

* Isaiah xxxii. 2.

wife and two children dependent on him ; and the whole income of the curacy 30l." I am sure that here I need say nothing more. The effect of this statement would be injured by any attempt at amplification. No private property !—a wife and two children dependent on him !—and the whole income of the curacy 30l. !

We of the ministry enter, I am persuaded, with all the fulness of professional fellow-feeling into the sufferings of brother ministers, who are placed in such circumstances of destitution. We all are prepared, in this sense, to feel and to admit the force of the passage, which, with perhaps some little violence, may be applied to our present purpose. " We, then, that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."* We that are strong, that are comparatively " rich and increased with goods," must watch against the spirit of selfishness. *We are not to please ourselves.* We must be on our guard that we spend not in self-pleasing—in self-indulgence—those funds, which, if properly applied, might not only relieve the wants and refresh the spirits of a less affluent brother minister, but might also contribute essentially to the efficiency and the success of his ministry.

* Rom. xv. 1.

But on this I know well that I need not enlarge. I would not willingly be guilty of using flattering words, but it is the sincere conviction of my heart—a conviction grounded on the observations and experience of many years, and on the accounts of the numerous public charities which are the glory of this land—that “to their power, yea, and beyond their power,” the clergy are generally found ready to contribute to any institution of judicious benevolence, especially such as tend, in any degree, to promote the glory of God, and to extend among men the practical knowledge—the saving influence of the Gospel of salvation. They assume not any merit, they take not any credit to themselves, for so doing. They well know that if they did much more, if they did all that is required of them, they would still be but unprofitable servants.

As in spiritual things they are stewards, “stewards of the mysteries of God,” so also in carnal things, in dispensing that portion of the riches of this world which has been committed to their care, they still feel that they are *stewards*, stewards who in this instance also must give an account of their stewardship on that solemn day when the Lord shall reckon with his servants.

And I am persuaded that there are very

many among the Laity who, when cases such as those which I have alluded to are brought under their notice, will be not only ready but *eager* to give relief, when they know in what manner relief can be extended without hurting the feelings, without wounding the delicacy, of him who is the object of it. There are very many laymen who most readily allow that, in spiritual offices, as well as in temporal, the labourer is worthy of his hire—that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel—that they who serve the altar should live of the altar—should be provided with a sufficiency of the common necessities and comforts of life.

Some unthinking persons, when any appeal of the nature alluded to is made to their benevolence, are, I believe, in the habit of saying, “let the Church take care of itself,” most erroneously confining the word Church to the Ministers of the Church, and, as it were, excommunicating themselves, virtually cutting themselves off from the privileges of Church-membership. Such language is the language of reckless, unfeeling, unreflecting ignorance. If some benefices, some stations in the Church, are amply endowed, that surely is no reason why those who are able should refuse to contribute towards the main-

tenance, towards the relief, of Ministers who, from utter inadequacy of endowment, are reduced to a state of distress and destitution. I have already observed, that the exaggerated notions respecting the wealth of the Church, which once obtained currency, have been in great measure dissipated by the more accurate information which has recently been given to the public. Extensive measures, indeed, are now projected—I should rather say are in actual operation—for an improvement in the distribution of the revenues of the Church ;—measures which, though not altogether unattended with *some* infringement, *some* violation of the rights of property, yet seemed, perhaps, to be called for by the urgency of the case, and by the voice of public opinion. But whatever the efficiency of these measures may prove, many years—many generations probably—will pass away before all the poorer benefices will be sufficiently endowed. As it seems to be in the nature of things—one of the arrangements of God's providence—that “ the poor shall never cease out of the land,”* as it is still true that “ the poor ye have always with you, so that whenever ye will ye may do them good,”† so it is to be apprehended that the period will

* Deut. xv. 11.

† Mark xiv. 7.

never arrive, in which no Christian Minister will be found in a state of destitution—destitution occasioned, not by their own fault or improvidence, but by the utter inadequacy of their stated remuneration.

There is another fallacy, the influence of which, on the minds of some men, I believe to be not inconsiderable. In most districts there are probably to be found one, or two, or more clergymen living in comparative affluence; according to the words of the son of Sirach, “Rich men furnished with ability, living peaceably in their habitations,” and, at the same time, actively and usefully engaged in their pastoral duties, “by their knowledge of learning meet for the people, wise and eloquent in their instructions.”* Of the money which these clergymen expend, in their own parishes, and in their immediate neighbourhood, in the encouragement of various branches of trade, in the promotion of industry, in decent hospitality, and in ministering to the necessities of the poor, a large portion—perhaps the largest portion—is derived, *not* from the revenues of the Church, but from their own private resources, from the successful industry, from the professional exertions, from the frugality and foresight of

* Ecclus. xliv. 6, 4.

some one or more of their ancestors, either immediate or remote. In the estimation, however, of ignorance, and envy, and jealousy, —jealousy from which, I am sorry to say, some, who by their education and by their own rank in society ought to be above such low feelings, are not entirely free—the whole of the money thus expended is set down to the account of the Church, and invidiously spoken of as an indication of the wealth of the Clergy.

But I do wrong to trespass on your time by such remarks as these, which to this congregation are quite unnecessary.

Neither need I to remind you of the great stress which throughout the Scriptures is laid upon the duty of almsgiving, upon deeds of mercy and brotherly-kindness. You all well know that a readiness to perform such acts of charity, as we have opportunity, is repeatedly spoken of as an indication of the sincerity and strength of our faith. You all well know, that our Lord himself represents the sentences at the great day of retribution as mainly depending upon the performance or non-performance of acts of beneficence.

Nearly a year has passed away since in this pulpit I took occasion to remark, that the whole fabric of our religion—all the doctrines

and duties of Christianity—are based upon the death of Christ as their foundation or corner-stone. Of duties, the first and most important is the love of God. This is the first and great commandment. But to the love of God, the most prevailing and persuasive motive is the redemption of the world by the death of his beloved Son. We love God because he first loved us, and gave his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. The love of God, however, cannot exist in sincerity and vigour, if unaccompanied by the love of our neighbour ; “ For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen ? ” — “ and this commandment have ye from him, that he that loveth God love his brother also.” But, neither the love of God nor the love of our neighbour can be genuine, unless it induces us to be willing to relieve those who are in distress. “ Whoso hath this world’s goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him,—how dwelleth the love of God in him ? ” *

Our Lord assures us, that whoso giveth a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, † whoso gives relief to any one on account of the relation which he bears to Christ, shall in no wise lose his reward. And who bear to

* 1 John iii. 17.

† Matt. x. 42.

Christ a *nearer* relation than those who have faithfully inculcated on their congregation Christ's precepts, and Christ's example,—have taught them to trust for mercy to Christ's mediation and atonement,—have baptised in his name, and ministered at his altar ?

The Apostle bids us to do good unto all men ; all men have a claim to our kindness, and, when in distress, to our compassion ;—but he continues, “ especially unto them that are of the household of faith.”—And who can be designated as being of the household of faith more properly than those, whose office and delight it has been, to preach faith in Christ crucified, and to preserve and build up the flock committed to their care, in the holy faith once delivered to the saints ?

The voice both of Scripture and of experience assures us, that “ it is more blessed to give than to receive.”* But surely a double blessing must attend on those gifts, which, at one and the same time, contribute to relieve the destitution of a Minister of Christ, and to sustain and carry on the ministrations and offices of religion among those who, but for such assistance, would be in danger of being scattered abroad, as sheep that have no shepherd.

* Acts xx. 35.

CHURCH UNION SOCIETY,

IN THE

DIOCESE OF SALISBURY,

INSTITUTED A. D. M.DCCC.XXVII.

Patron :

THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY.

President :

THE VERY REV. THE DEAN OF SALISBURY.

Vice-Presidents :

The Precentor of Salisbury Cathedral	The Archdeacon of Berks
The Chancellor of the Church	The Archdeacon of Sarum
The Chancellor of the Diocese	The Archdeacon of Wilts
The Treasurer and Sub-Dean of Salisbury Cathedral	The Canons Residentiary and Prebendaries of Salisbury Cathedral.

TREASURER—W. B. BRODIE, Esq., M.P., Sarum.

ASSISTANT TREASURER—Rev. R. B. FISHER, Basildon, Berks.

BANKERS—Messrs. BRODIE and Co., Sarum.

SECRETARY—Rev. W. DANSEY, Donhead St. Andrew.

REPORT, A. D. M.DCCC.XXXV.

Η Φιλαδέλφια Μενετω.

THE great principle of this Society is to promote that UNION, which, in every Christian and professional view, is so desirable, and the want of which has been often spoken of as a reproach to the Established Church, and has sometimes been felt by individuals to their irreparable distress.

Next to this great principle of Christian Union, the immediate objects of the Society are to afford to superannuated Curates the means of retiring from duties to which they are no longer equal; to enable aged and infirm Incumbents, of small incomes, to provide an Assistant Curate; and to promote, as much as possible, the efficiency and residence of the Parochial Clergy.

Endowed Lecturers, as well as Incumbents and Curates, rendered unequal to their duties by protracted sickness or age, are considered objects of this Charity.

The Society also extends its relief to Parish Clerks of good character, who, from age or infirmity, are become inefficient, and are desirous of retiring from the duties of their office.

In all cases, the relief intended, will, in fact, operate for the benefit of parishes, which are suffering from duties inadequately performed. The aid, therefore, which is proposed to be provided, is an object of vital interest to the Laity, as well as the Clergy; that is, to all who have any feeling for the credit and efficiency of the Christian Ministry, and the success of parochial instruction. From the Laity, therefore, as well as from the Clergy, a Church Union Society, with such objects, may hope for countenance and support.

RULES.

I.—THAT subscribers of ten shillings annually be members of the Society.

II.—That subscribers of one guinea, and upwards, annually, be eligible to the committee.

III.—That subscriptions to the Society be due on the first of January, for the year then commencing.

IV.—That benefactions and legacies be most gratefully accepted.

V.—That all subscriptions, benefactions, &c., when amounting together to the sum of one hundred pounds, be invested in the Three per cent. Consols,—in the names of the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Salisbury, Patron; The Very Reverend the Dean of Salisbury, President; and W. B. Brodie, Esq., Treasurer of the Society.

VI.—That all relief granted by the Society be from the interest of the subscriptions, benefactions, &c., in the public funds.

VII.—That the Patron, President, and Secretary of the Society be *ex officio* members of the committee.

VIII.—That the Rural Deans of the diocese be members of the committee; and any number of the committee, not less than three, constitute a quorum.

IX.—That an annual meeting of the committee be held on the second Tuesday in August, and a Sermon, in aid of the funds and objects of the Society, be preached at the

Cathedral on that day ; due notice being given thereof in the public journals.

X.—That the Rural Deans be requested to collect subscriptions and benefactions from the clergy and others within their respective deanries, and to transmit the same, *annually*, through the Treasurer, or Assistant-Treasurer, to the bank of Messrs. Brodie and Co., Salisbury.

XI.—That as soon as the amount of the subscriptions and benefactions shall be productive of interest sufficient for the purpose, the Widows' and Orphans' Charity of Wilts be relieved, by the Church Union Society, from all charitable charges that do not relate to the widows and orphans of the clergy.

XII.—That the intent and design of this Society being the supply of adequate duty, rather than the mere relief of sickness or infirmity, the following rules and conditions be the basis on which relief shall be granted.

That a petition, signed by the person applying for relief, and countersigned by two or more subscribers or benefactors (setting forth a statement of his case and circumstances—the population of his parish—the duty, whether single or double—the name of the intended curate or assistant, and whether he is to confine himself to the service of the church of the petitioner, or to combine other, and what duty with it), shall be sent to the Rural Dean of the district, in which the living, or curacy, or lectureship is situated, on or before the first day of July in each year, to be by him transmitted to the Secretary, for the consideration of the committee.

XIII.—That no relief be voted but at the annual meeting of the committee, nor any money paid without a certificate, signed by the Lord Bishop of the diocese, on the report of the Rural Dean of the district, that the duty of the parish has been performed, during the incapacity of the petitioner, to his Lordship's entire satisfaction.

XIV.—That petitions and certificates be renewed annually, so long as a continuance of relief is desired.

XV.—That no Incumbent, or Curate, or Lecturer, be deemed an object of the charity, whose benefice or income, from whatever source derived, shall exceed the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds per annum ; except in particular cases, to be determined at the discretion of the committee ; or who shall not have officiated in some parish, or under some incumbent in the diocese, for the space of, at least, two years.

XVI.—That this Society will afford assistance towards the building, purchasing, improving, or otherwise rendering

habitable, glebe houses, so as to facilitate the residence of officiating ministers within the precincts of their respective parishes.

XVII.—That a sum, not exceeding five guineas, be given, at the discretion of the committee, towards the burial of any unbeneficed clergyman who may have partaken of aid from the Society.

XVIII.—That, when the interest of the subscriptions and benefactions shall be sufficient for the purpose, the sum of five pounds, at the discretion of the committee, be allowed yearly to superannuated Clerks retiring from the duty of such parishes as have been subscribers of forty shillings, at least, one twelvemonth, either by vote of vestry, or by the subscription of the Incumbent, or others—the preference, however, being always given to the claims of aged or infirm Clergymen; and that Parish Clerks, applying for relief, produce satisfactory testimonials as to character, good conduct, and the necessity of their retiring from the duties of their office.

XIX.—That an account of the receipts and expenditure be printed annually, with the list of the subscribers and benefactors.

FORM OF PETITION.

To the CHURCH UNION SOCIETY, in the DIOCESE of SALISBURY.

The petition of A. B. sheweth, that he is the (Incumbent, or Curate, or Lecturer) of the parish of C. in the county of D. in the diocese of Salisbury; that he has officiated in the said parish for the space of two years, but is now rendered unequal to his duties, by (age, or infirmity, or sickness); that the population of the said parish amounts to, or exceeds, souls; that the duty is (single or double); that the name of the (Curate or Assistant) intended to be employed in the said parish, is E. F., and is to confine himself (or not) to the service of the said church. Lastly, that the benefice or income, from whatever source derived, of the petitioner, doth not exceed the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds per annum: he, therefore, prays such relief as to this Society shall seem meet.

Signed, the day of 183

A. B.

FORM OF CERTIFICATE.

We, whose names are underwritten, personally know the petitioner, and believe the allegations of his petition to be true.

G. H. } SUBSCRIBERS OR
J. K. } BENEFACTORS.

L. M., RURAL DEAN.

Dated the day of

183

BENEFACTORS.

M.DCCC.XXVII.—M.DCCC.XXXV.

					\$	s.	d.
Anonymous	-	-	-	-	75	0	0
Anonymous, 1835	-	-	-	-	2	0	0
Anonymous, 1835	-	-	-	-	0	10	0
Anonymous, 1835	-	-	-	-	0	5	0
Ashurst, Rev. Dr., All Soul's College, Oxford	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
Berens, Venerable Archdeacon	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
Bowles, Rev. W. L., Canon Resid. Sarum	-	-	-	-	2	0	0
Burrell, Mrs. W., Sunninghill, Berks, 1835	-	-	-	-	5	0	0
Caswell, Rev. R. C., Lavington	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
Clarke, Venerable Archdeacon	-	-	-	-	5	0	0
Duko, Rev. E., Lake House	-	-	-	-	2	0	0
Dyson, Rev. F., Tidworth, 1835	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
Estcourt, T. G. B., Esq., M. P.	-	-	-	-	14	6	11
Fisher, Rev. R. B., Basildon	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
Goddard, Rev. Dr., Prebendary of Sarum	-	-	-	-	5	0	0
Grove, Mrs. P., Netherampton, 1835	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
Hume (late), Rev. J. H., Canon Resid. Sarum	-	-	-	-	5	0	0
Macdonald, Venerable Archdeacon	-	-	-	-	5	0	0
Neeld, John, Esq., M. P., Grittleton House	-	-	-	-	20	0	0
Ditto, 1835	-	-	-	-	5	0	0
Pembroke, Dowager Countess of, 1835	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
Progers, Rev. E., Brixton, Surrey	-	-	-	-	5	0	0
Pusey, Rev. E. B., Pusey House	-	-	-	-	50	0	0
Ridding, Rev. C. H., Rolleston	-	-	-	-	5	0	0
Sarum, The Lord Bishop of	-	-	-	-	425	0	0
Sarum, The Very Rev. the Dean of	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
Shepherd, The Right Hon. Sir S., Streatley	-	-	-	-	5	0	0
Ditto, 1835	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
Temple, W., Esq., Bishopstrow	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
Valpy (late), Rev. Dr., Reading	-	-	-	-	10	0	0
Warneford, Rev. Dr., Lydiard Millicent, 1835	-	-	-	-	20	0	0
Williams, Rev. E. H. G., Marlborough	-	-	-	-	24	0	0
					790	1	11

SUBSCRIBERS.

MD.CCC.XXXV.

SUBDEANRY OF SARUM.

W. B. BRODIE, ESQ., M.P., TREASURER.

Brodie, W. B., Esq., M. P., Close	-	-	1	1	0
Hawes, Rev. Dr., Prebendary of Sarum	-	-	1	1	0

	£	s.	d.
Heathcote, Rev. S., Bramshaw Hill	-	1	0 0
Kerrich, Rev. W. Prebendary of Sarum	-	1	1 0
Neave, Miss, Sarum	-	1	1 0
Sarum, The Lord Bishop of	-	30	0 0
Sarum, The Very Rev. the Dean of	-	2	2 0
		37	6 0

ARCHDEACONRY OF SARUM.

W. B. BRODIE, ESQ., M. P., TREASURER.

DEANRY OF AMESBURY.

REV. C. GROVE, RURAL DEAN.

Duke, Rev. E., Lake House	-	-	1	1	0
Fowle, Rev. F. W., Amesbury	-	-	0	10	0
Girdlestone, Rev. —, Landford	-	-	1	1	0
Marsh, Rev. Chancellor, Winterslow	-	-	1	1	0
Smart, Rev. N., Farley Hospital	-	-	1	1	0
Spyers, Rev. T., Idmiston	-	-	0	10	0
Webb, Rev. R., Durrington	-	-	0	10	0
			5	14	0

DEANRY OF WILTON.

REV. G. A. MONTGOMERY, RURAL DEAN.

Batt, Mrs., New Hall	-	-	1	0	0
Clarke, Venerable Archdeacon, Downton	-	-	1	1	0
Eddy, Rev. J., Bemerton	-	-	1	1	0
Fox, Rev. T., South Newton	-	-	1	1	0
Herbert, Hon. S., M. P., Wilton House	-	-	5	0	0
Stockwell, Rev. J. S., Wilton	-	-	0	10	6
			9	13	6

DEANRY OF CHALKE.

REV. F. LEAR, }
REV. W. DANSEY, } RURAL DEANS.

Austen, Rev. C., Tollard Royal	-	-	1	1	0
Blackmore, Rev. R., Donhead St. Mary	-	-	1	1	0
Dansey, Rev. W. Donhead St. Andrew	-	-	1	1	0
Downes, Rev. R., Berwick St. John	-	-	1	1	0
Griffith, Rev. R., Fifield Bayant	-	-	0	10	6

	£	s.	d.
Grove, Rev. C. H., Berwick St. Leonard -	1	1	0
Grove, Rev. C. Odstock -	1	1	0
Hony, Rev. W. E., Baverstock -	1	1	0
Lear, Rev. F., Chilmark -	1	1	0
Montgomery, Rev. G. A., Bishopstone -	1	1	0
Morres, Rev. R., Britford -	1	1	0
Ord, Rev. R., Semley -	1	1	0
Shrubbs, Rev. H., Stratford Toney -	1	1	0
Still, Rev. J., Fonthill Gifford -	1	1	0
Wrottesley, Rev. C. East Knoyle -	1	1	0
	15	4	6

DEANRY OF WYLYE.

REV. W. D. THRING, D. D., } RURAL DEANS.
 REV. G. P. LOWTHER, }

Coates, Rev. R. T., Steeple Langford -	1	1	0
Cook, Rev. J., Westbury -	0	10	0
Dalby, Rev. W., Warminster -	1	1	0
Dampier, Rev. J., Codford St. Peter -	1	1	0
Festing, Rev. G. R., Maiden Bradley -	0	10	0
Griffith, Rev. R., Corsley -	0	10	6
Hoare, Rev. R., Stourton -	1	1	0
Lowther, Rev. G. P., Orcheston St. George -	1	1	0
Meek, Rev. R., Brixton Deverill -	0	10	0
Ridding, Rev. C. H., Rollestone -	1	1	0
Settle, Rev. S., Winterborne Stoke -	1	1	0
Smith, Rev. G., Norton Bavant -	0	10	0
St. Barbe, Rev. R. F., Stockton -	1	1	0
Thring, Rev. Dr., Sutton Veney -	1	1	0
Webster, Rev. G., Codford St. Mary -	0	10	6
Williams, Rev. D., Heytesbury -	1	1	0
	13	11	0

DEANRY OF POTTERNE.

REV. T. A. METHUEN, } RURAL DEANS.
 REV. G. J. MAJENDIE, }

Bassett, Rev. A., Great Cheverill -	0	10	0
Caswall, Rev. R. C., Bishop's Lavington -	1	1	0
Cozens, Rev. W. B., Monkton Farley -	0	10	0
Crawley, Rev. R., Steeple Ashton -	1	1	0
Edmonstone, Rev. G., Potterne -	1	1	0
Estcourt, T. G. B., Esq., M. P. -	5	0	0
Fisher, Rev. Canon, Poulshot -	1	1	0

			£	s.	d.
Fulford, Rev. F., Trowbridge	-	-	1	1	0
Hume, Rev. G., Melksham	-	-	1	1	0
Orchard, Rev. G. R., Road	-	-	0	10	6
Spencer, Rev. —, Winkfield	-	-	1	1	0
			13	17	6

ARCHDEACONRY OF WILTS.

W. B. BRODIE, ESQ., M. P., TREASURER.

DEANRY OF MARLBOROUGH.

REV. G. P. BUXTON, }
REV. H. WILSON, } RURAL DEANS.

Buxton, Rev. G. P., Mildenhall	-	-	1	1	0
Edmeades, Rev. J., Preshute	-	-	0	10	6
Elston, Rev. H., Chute	-	-	0	10	0
Meyler, Rev. T., Marlborough	-	-	0	10	6
Seagram, Rev. J., Aldbourne	-	-	1	1	0
			3	13	0

DEANRY OF AVEBURY.

REV. T. H. RIPLEY, }
REV. E. VINCENT, } RURAL DEANS.

Bowles, Rev. Canon, Bremhill	-	-	1	1	0
Caulfield, Rev. E. W., Bechingstoke	-	-	1	1	0
Du Boulay, Rev. J., Headington	-	-	1	1	0
Macdonald, Ven. Archdeacon, Bishop's Cannings	-	-	1	1	0
Majendie, Rev. G. J., Stanton	-	-	1	1	0
Methuen, Rev. T. A., Allcannings	-	-	2	2	0
Money, Rev. W., Yatesbury	-	-	1	1	0
Musgrave, Rev. Canon, Compton Bassett	-	-	1	1	0
Ripley, Rev. T. H., Wootton Bassett	-	-	1	1	0
Vincent, Rev. E., Rowde	-	-	1	1	0
			11	11	0

DEANRY OF CRICKLADE.

REV. H. J. BARTON, RURAL DEAN.

Barton, Rev. H. J., Latton	-	-	1	1	0
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Davy, Rev. C., Inglesham	-	-	0	10	0
Purrier, Rev. H., Little Hinton	-	-	1	1	0
Trenchard, Rev. Dr., Stanton	-	-	1	1	0
Woodroffe, Rev. N. G., Somerford Keynes	-	-	1	1	0
			4	14	0

DEANRY OF MALMESBURY.

REV. E. RYDER, }
 REV. W. SHORT, } RURAL DEANS.
 REV. C. G. COTES, }

Ashe, Rev. R., Langley Burrell	-	-	1	1	0
Bennett, Rev. W. C., Corsham	-	-	0	10	0
Burne, Rev. H. T., Grittleton	-	-	0	10	6
Burne, Rev. W. W., Grittleton	-	-	1	1	0
Demainbray, Rev. S. G., Great Somerford	-	-	1	1	0
Edie, Rev. A., Seagry	-	-	1	1	0
Horlock, Rev. H. D. C. S., Box	-	-	1	1	0
Kilvert, Rev. —	-	-	0	10	0
Lawes, Rev. J., Biddestone	-	-	0	10	6
Macdonald, Rev. J., Garsdon	-	-	0	10	0
Maskelyne, Rev. —, Minty	-	-	0	10	0
Mullens, Rev. D., Ditcheridge	-	-	0	10	0
Neve, Rev. —, Poole	-	-	1	1	0
Ogle, Rev. E. C., Sutton Benger	-	-	1	1	0
Paley, Rev. J., Lacock	-	-	1	1	0
Rowlandson, Rev. —, near Chippenham	-	-	0	10	6
Ryder, Rev. E., Oaksey	-	-	1	1	0
Short, Rev. W., Chippenham	-	-	1	1	0
Shuttleworth, Rev. Dr., Warden of New College, Oxford, Foxley	-	-	1	1	0
West, Rev. —, Luckington	-	-	0	10	0
			16	2	6

ARCHDEACONRY OF BERKS.

REV. R. B. FISHER, TREASURER.

DEANRY OF ABINGDON.

REV. J. PEARSON, }
 REV. W. SLATTER, } RURAL DEANS.
 REV. N. DODSON, }
 REV. W. W. CHAMBERS, }

Andrews, Rev. G. Sutton Courtney	-	0	10	6
----------------------------------	---	---	----	---

Berens, Venerable Archdeacon, Shrivenham		2	2	0
Bertie, Hon. and Rev. F., Witham -	-	0	10	0
Bouverie, Rev. E., Coleshill -	-	1	0	0
Bowles, T., Esq., Milton Hill -	-	1	1	0
Bowyer, Rev. H., Sunningwell -	-	1	1	0
Chambers, Rev. W., Ashbury -	-	1	0	0
Cleaver, Rev. J. F., Coxwell -	-	1	1	0
Clutterbuck, Rev. J., Wittenham -	-	0	10	0
Cotton, Rev. K. L., Denchworth -	-	0	10	0
Dodson, Rev. N., Abingdon -	-	0	10	0
Duffield, T., Esq., Marcham Park -	-	2	2	0
Evans, Rev. W., Pusey -	-	1	1	0
Evanson, Rev. W. A., Blewbury -	-	1	0	0
Hawkins, Rev. J., Compton Beauchamp -	-	0	10	0
Hewlett, Rev. J., Abingdon -	-	0	10	0
Hilliard, Rev. F. J., Wittenham -	-	0	10	0
Hoskins, Rev. Dr., Appleton -	-	1	1	0
Knight, Rev. G., Harwell -	-	0	10	0
Morwell, Rev. B., Drayton -	-	0	10	0
Nelson, Rev. J., Childrey -	-	0	10	0
Pearson, Rev. J., Sparsholt -	-	1	1	0
Poyntz, Rev. N., Longworth -	-	1	1	0
Randolph, Rev. H., Marcham -	-	1	1	0
Slatter, Rev. W., Cumnor -	-	1	1	0
Wapshare, Rev. C., East Hendred -	-	1	1	0
Warden of All Souls' College, Oxford -	-	1	1	0
Wintle, Rev. R., Culham -	-	1	1	0
		25	6	6

DEANRY OF WALLINGFORD.

REV. R. B. FISHER, RURAL DEAN.

Blackstone, W. S., Esq., M. P., Castle Priory		1	1	0
Burgess, Rev. J. R., Streatley -	-	0	10	6
Fisher, Rev. R. B., Basildon -	-	1	1	0
Flamank, Rev. J., Wallingford -	-	1	1	0
Frith, Rev. Dr., Wallingford -	-	0	10	0
Hedges, J. A., Esq., Wallingford -	-	1	0	0
Henslow, Rev. J. S., Cholsey -	-	0	10	0
James, Rev. W., South Moreton -	-	0	10	6
Langley, Rev. J., Wallingford -	-	1	1	0
Morrell, C., Esq., Wallingford -	-	0	10	6
Stone, W., Esq., Streatley -	-	0	10	6
Taylor, Rev. H., North Moreton -	-	0	10	0

	£	s.	d.
Thompson, Rev. M., Brightwell - -	1	1	0
Valpy, Captain, R. N., Streatley - -	0	10	6
Wall, H., Esq., Wallingford - -	0	10	6
	10	18	0

DEANRY OF READING.

REV. W. L. RHAM, }
 REV. G. HULME, } RURAL DEANS.
 REV. G. W. CURTIS, }

Bishop, Rev. W., Ufton - - -	1	1	0
Blandy, J. J., Esq., Reading - -	1	1	0
Breedon, Rev. H., Pangbourne - -	0	10	6
Cherry, Rev. H. C., Burfield - -	1	1	0
Connop, Rev. J., Bradfield Hall - -	1	1	0
Curtis, Rev. G. W., Padworth - -	0	10	6
Ellerton, Rev. Dr., Theale - -	0	10	6
Gosset, Rev. T. S., Old Windsor - -	1	1	0
Halton, Rev. L., Woolhampton - -	1	1	0
Harris, R, Esq., Reading - -	1	1	0
Hopkins, J., Esq., Pangbourne - -	1	1	0
Hulme, Rev. G., Shinfield - -	1	1	0
Hulse, Rev. T., Englefield - -	0	10	6
Knipe, Rev. J., Aldermaston - -	0	10	6
Levett, Rev. W., Bray - -	1	1	0
Manesty, Rev. C., Purley - -	0	10	6
Marriott, Rev. J., Bradfield - -	1	1	0
Moore, Rev. J. T., Bradfield - -	1	1	0
Randall, Rev. J., Binfield - -	1	1	0
Rham, Rev. W. L., Winkfield - -	1	1	0
Rickford, T., Esq., Reading - -	0	10	6
Romaine, Mrs., Reading - -	1	1	0
Routh, Rev. Dr., President of Magdalen College, Oxford, Tilehurst - -	1	1	0
Shepherd, Mrs., Amport - -	5	0	0
Stephens, W., Esq., Prospect Hill - -	2	2	0
Stevens, Rev. H., Bradfield - -	1	1	0
Thoyts, Mrs., Sulhampstead House - -	1	0	0
Townsend, Rev. A. B., East Hampstead - -	1	1	0
Vansittart, Rev. Dr., White Waltham - -	1	1	0
Wilder, Rev. H. Sulham - -	0	10	6
Wintle, Rev. T., Tidmarsh - -	1	1	0
	33	6	0

DEANRY OF NEWBURY.

REV. H. W. MAJENDIE, }
 REV. T. LOVEDAY, } RURAL DEANS.

			£	s.	d.
Austen, Rev. T. J., Aldworth	-	-	0	10	6
Howard, Rev. J. F., Yattendon	-	-	1	1	0
Loveday, Rev. T., East Ilsley	-	-	1	1	0
Majendie, Rev. H. W., Speen	-	-	1	1	0
Reed, Rev. J., Hampstead Norris	-	-	0	10	0
Sloccock, Rev. S, Wasing	-	-	1	1	0
Wylde, Rev. G. Chieveley	-	-	1	1	0
			6	5	6

GENERAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT,

From December 31, 1834, to December 31, 1835.

RECEIPTS.				PAYMENTS.				
	£	s.	d.			£	s.	d.
Balance of 1834, in the Treasurer's hands	-	44	11	Printing, Postage, &c.	-	-	8	4
Benefactions received in 1835	-	67	15	Relief granted to Case I. for 1834	-	-	20	0
Subscriptions in 1835 (per list, 207 <i>l.</i> 3 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>), received	170	4	5	Ditto, for 1835	-	-	30	0
Dividends on Stock, 3 per cents.	-	67	10	Ditto to Case II.	-	-	22	0
Balance due to the Treasurer	-	44	10	Ditto to Case III.	-	-	22	0
			4	Ditto to Case IV.	-	-	20	0
				Purchase of Stock, viz., 300 <i>l.</i> , 3 per cents.	-	-	272	7
								0
	<u>£394 11 2</u>					<u>£394 11 2</u>		

Case I.—Is Perpetual Curate of a Village containing upwards of 600 souls. He performs two services on the Sabbath—has no private property—a wife and two children dependent on him—and the whole income of the curacy is only 30l.

Case II.—Is an afflicted Clergyman, heretofore relieved by *The Charity for the Relief of the Widows and Orphans of Poor Clergymen in Wales*, and now taken up by *The Church Union Society*, in compliance with Rule XI.

Case III.—Is an afflicted Clergyman under similar circumstances.

Case IV.—Is a Curate commencing residence in a newly-erected parsonage-house—having the care of two parishes in a remote part of the diocese—and whose means are quite insufficient to supply the necessary furniture. A case, in the opinion of the Committee, of peculiar exigency.

SALISBURY:
W. B. BRODIE AND CO., CANAL.

THE RESPECTIVE DUTIES OF THE CLERGY AND PEOPLE
CONSIDERED IN REFERENCE TO THE INSTITUTION
OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

A
SERMON,
PREACHED IN ST. NICHOLAS' CHURCH, NEWCASTLE ON
TYNE, ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER XXVII, MDCCCXXXVI,

AT THE
VISITATION

OF THE
VENERABLE THOMAS SINGLETON, D.D.,
ARCHDEACON OF NORTHUMBERLAND:

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE ARCHDEACON AND OF THE
CLERGY PRESENT.

BY THE
REV. JOHN BESLY, D.C.L.,
VICAR OF LONG BENTON, RECTOR OF ASTON SUBEDGE, AND LATE FELLOW OF
BALLIOL COLLEGE.

LONDON :
PRINTED FOR J., G., AND F. RIVINGTON ;
D. A. TALBOYS, OXFORD ; CURRIE & BOWMAN, NEWCASTLE.
1836.



TO THE
VENERABLE THOMAS SINGLETON, D.D.,
ARCHDEACON OF NORTHUMBERLAND, &c., &c.,

AND TO
THE REVEREND THE CLERGY
OF THE DEANERY OF NEWCASTLE,

THIS SERMON,
PREACHED BY HIS APPOINTMENT, AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR
UNITED REQUEST,
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR FAITHFUL FRIEND AND BROTHER,
JOHN BESLY.

VICARAGE, LONG BENTON.

A

S E R M O N.

GALATIANS, ch. 1.

“Not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father.”

SUCH is the source, thus high and thus unquestionable, to which St. Paul boldly and explicitly refers the origin and authority of his ministry. Leaving no room for question among the churches of Galatia as to the paramount claim which his admonitions and his doctrine therefore possessed to their entire acceptance and obedience, he announces, at the very outset of his Epistle, the high and holy quarter from whence his commission was derived.

Indeed, however humble as a man, however frequently called to struggle with personal difficulties, however careful to render himself in no respect chargeable upon the proffered liberality of his grateful disciples, he never scruples to as-

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sert the dignity of his high calling in Christ Jesus, not enduring that any in the churches of the believers should set him one whit behind the very chiefest Apostles; and careful, equally in the face of the open adversary, as in the presence of the wavering half-converted novice, to magnify his office as a minister of Jesus Christ.

The conduct and bearing of the Apostle in this respect are so marked and striking, that they cannot fail to have attracted the attention at least of every minister of that Gospel which Paul so successfully preached. And we also, my reverend Brethren,—if we would approve ourselves faithful stewards of that word of truth,—we must not pass lightly over this particular in the ministerial character of so illustrious a servant of our common Master. We cannot surely consider his anxiety to assert the authority of his mission as a circumstance which calls for no corresponding demeanour in the Christian Minister of every age. The tone also, and the manner of St. Paul were such as sufficiently to vindicate the most uncompromising firmness in this respect from misconstruction, and to banish every apprehension of unworthy or secular ends either in regard to his own personal influence or the undue aggrandizement of the ministerial office. Such a tone and such a bearing (so far as we may faintly copy them) will still do much to extend the effect

of our ministrations upon the people, and to facilitate that acknowledgment of our mission and authority which is to this day so essential to the full and cordial reception of our message.

We might, indeed, fondly imagine that the intrinsic excellence and beauty of God's word were alone sufficient to recommend it to the acceptance of mankind. But He, "who knew what was in man," foresaw, and the experience of every age has discovered, that however loudly our admiration of its doctrines may be professed, however greatly we may wish to attain its promises, and however unquestionable its claims on our regard may be, still those claims must be enforced upon the hearts of men ; those doctrines and those promises must be affirmed in connection with the corresponding duties,—too often overlooked—which, nevertheless, spring out of, and result from both.

To this office and ministry He called first his Apostles that, by their teaching, they might carry the word of his Gospel unto all nations ; and these, in turn, committed the things which they had heard "to faithful men, who might be able to teach others also."

Thus gave He not only the word of doctrine, but authority also to proclaim the same. But had those, who first entered upon this office, been unable to produce such authority, had they been

without such a commission, and had their doctrines been destitute of a higher sanction than their own, then would their ministry, if not repudiated at once, have been open to censure as impertinent and officious, while the system they endeavoured to propagate was alternately accepted or rejected, as it chanced to be more or less clearly deduced from the ultimate and only source of all moral obligation.

Destitute of such authority for himself and his doctrines, the Minister of the Gospel would be committed to a hopeless undertaking. In some rarely occurring instances, and on some few points, his teaching might elicit a voluntary acquiescence, but the plain absolute duty of giving heed to the word and doctrine in their whole unabated force, would cease to exist; should he dare to announce the more strict and uncompromising truths of the Gospel, they would find but little sympathy in our corrupted nature; and the messenger of peace, the ambassador of reconciliation, unauthorised and unaccredited, would fail in power to carry through the embassy he had undertaken.

By such a defect of authority in the Christian ministry, the most important and essential truths (always the greatest blessings, though seldom readily received,) would become like their divine author, despised and rejected of men. Thus at least it is found to be with other counsels and

admonitions ; and the observation is familiar to us all, "That the most proper advices, the most prudent counsels, the most useful admonitions, unless given by a person who has a warrantable right of admonishing, and an uncontested power of instructing, are commonly looked upon as unseasonable, officious, and impertinent."*

The pastor may indeed be called to his office by his flock, and some societies of Christians are founded on this principle ; but, not to say that the same body which first called him to the exercise of his functions, might also at will dismiss him from their exercise ; it may be apprehended, that the preacher thus elected would seldom be able to use that boldness, that freedom and plainness of speech, which, unpalatable as they sometimes prove, are essential to his office ; and moreover, that he would scarcely be less open to the imputation of officious impertinence, than if his ministrations were altogether uninvited. Indeed, it is no less true in respect of the admonitory duties of the Christian Minister, than of every other class of advisers, that they can only be efficiently exercised under an authority distinct from, and superior to, the parties to whom their admonitions are to be addressed.

* See a Sermon preached before the University of Oxford, by J. Betty, M. A., Fellow of Exeter College, on the 21st of September, 1729, on the necessity and institution of the Ministry.

But true as this is of advice in general, it surely is not less so in respect to those self-denying doctrines and counsels which it forms so important a part of the duty of a Minister of the Gospel to deliver and enforce. How shall he preach, at least, how will his preaching be received, unless he be "sent"? Unless his mission be felt by himself and recognised by others, as being "not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father."

The vast importance of this mutual conviction to the success of our ministerial labours must be deeply impressed upon the mind of every labourer in the vineyard. And you, my reverend Brethren, are doubtless already so conversant with the arguments by which the divine authority of our ministry may be asserted and maintained; you have for yourselves already so clearly deduced its succession from those to whom it was first committed, that it will suffice on this occasion to have merely indicated the weight and importance of these points, without, however, entering, in your presence, upon any lengthened inductive argument for their establishment.

The occasion of our meeting here will be more profitably employed in awakening our mutual recollections of those serious obligations and the no less encouraging prospects of assistance, which are the result of this conviction. When on the one

hand we look to the Divine origin of our ministry, we cannot fear that it will ever be destitute of Divine support, or that it will entirely fail of being blessed to a successful issue. On the other, we cannot but feel how deeply our responsibility is enhanced, and with what incessant zeal and diligence we ought to exercise this ministry, wherein we believe ourselves to be fellow-workers with the great author and finisher of our faith. Let us then attempt an inquiry into the respective duties of minister and people as they stand affected by the Divine origin of our mission; and into the hopes and consolations which both may derive therefrom.

As respects the Minister himself, it must be his first and most obvious care to speak among his people "not in the words of man's wisdom," but "as of the oracles of God," whose ambassador he is; to "deliver to them none other Gospel than that which also he hath received;" to determine "not to know any thing" among his people "save Jesus Christ and him crucified." His faith and doctrine afford the first the most prominent test by which he will be tried. Let him; therefore, use "sound speech that cannot be condemned," that his teaching may not discredit the high source from whence he derives his mission.

If, then, he would "speak the things which be-

come sound doctrine," he must be careful in the study of the word of his commission—the book of Scripture. If he would speak the message of God fully and with effect unto the people, he must himself know well the language in which God hath spoken. Whatever branches of human knowledge may be brought to bear collaterally, either in illustration of the sacred word, or in the maintenance and defence of its teaching against the objections of gainsayers, all these should be diligently cultivated and concentrated upon this main object. But to the word—to the word of God itself must he dedicate his first and his latest studies. From that holy volume will they most fitly take their commencement,—from it, throughout all their circuit, they will never too distantly diverge, and, finally, to it will their sole, their ultimate direction tend, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." In that book he will not fail of finding the richest treasury of consolation to sustain and advance at once himself and his flock in the discipline of the Faith. In this will he also find the best stored armoury of weapons for defence against the adversaries. To this, then, must his closest study be directed, and if, like the favoured lawgiver of the Jews, he be much with God in the mount, his return unto his people will partake of that brightness out of which he has descended; the law

will be set forth in his teaching and in his life ; and his doctrine, like its source, will be heavenly.*

But however carefully he may strive to acquaint himself with the great standard of doctrine, all will avail as nothing in rendering that doctrine effective and influential unto the establishment of his hearers in the Faith, unless in his communication with his people, and in his preaching he combine earnestness with judgment ; above all, unless in his own life he exemplify the practical effect of this doctrine on himself. The man (whether charged with the ministry or not) who really feels and profits by the truths of the Gospel of salvation, will soon manifest their power and effect in his life. So obvious is this inference—it is one so invariably drawn by the most ordinary hearers, that the absence of a corresponding example is fatal to the effect of the best and most earnest preaching. If this be wanting, your apparent zeal will be suspected ; no earnestness of word or manner will ever compensate for the absence of that visible illustration of gospel truth which enables the humblest, the least gifted minister, by the well sustained tenor of a pious life, to conciliate silently but powerfully, and (by the blessing of God) per-

* If they be much with God in the mount, their returns to men will be with brightness in their faces, and the law, both in their hands and in their lives, and their doctrine shall be heavenly.—LEIGHTON.

manently to secure the devoted affections of his flock.

Too often, indeed, the most learned, the most zealous, even the most pious minister is doomed to see his labours frustrated ; to watch with anxious patience the seed which he has scattered with diligence, and to find all his care issue in disappointment. That this should be the case with us, why should we complain ; why should we be surprised ? for even thus the great Lord of the vineyard himself has taught us, that He looked for fruit to that vineyard which He had planted with every care, and digged and fenced about, and yet He found no fruit.

One caution, however, we may derive from our disappointments, and it is, that to these qualities of the Christian Minister there must be added a degree of sound judgment, of prudence, of Christian policy, in order to give effect to all the rest. Like your great precursors, whom the Lord made “fishers of men,” you must be careful lest you contribute by a rude and injudicious announcement of your message, to strengthen the objections, and to awaken the dormant prejudices of a hopeful convert. You have men of all tempers and opinions to deal with ; nay, men who, at different times, are different from themselves ; the presumptuous and the desponding, the learned and the ignorant alike demand your attention, and will task alike

your address, no less than your zeal and your patience. Like St. Paul, therefore, you must be "made all things to all men, that you may by all means save some."

Thus was this ministry exercised by men who called powers to their aid which are not vouchsafed, in the same degree, to us; and thus must we be content to labor, if we would acquire the glory of being useful instruments in extending and sustaining the kingdom of Christ,—if we would acquit ourselves with fidelity in that mission which, though it is committed to human agents, though it is exercised by frail weak men like ourselves, is yet "not of men neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father." But whatever be the means we employ and however great our diligence in using them, all must be done under a most complete conviction of our own inherent weakness. As we must not neglect them should they seem to fail, so neither, if haply they prove successful, must we take merit to ourselves from their success.

Assuredly the responsibility of the Christian minister is great and his duties embrace a range which the time of our meeting here is too limited to traverse. But, numerous, and varied, and weighty, as our duties are, we all I trust have felt that our encouragements are proportionable to our difficulties. He who is sensibly impressed

with the real dignity and importance of his office and calling as a minister of the Gospel of Christ, feels no anxiety lest the Master whom it is his glory to serve, should fail in supplying him with continued encouragement and support. The same gracious promise which accompanied His commission to those who first bore the word of his Gospel through a world lying in the darkness of heathenism,—that He would be with *them* ;—the same promise he considers as addressed also to himself—that Christ will be also with *him* in every difficulty ; even as He is with every faithful Minister—“ *always—unto the end of the world.*” However great the task and the difficulties which we may be called to confront or to undergo, we can remember that He is faithful that promised, and that if we be weak and unworthy and insufficient of ourselves, it serveth only more clearly to demonstrate that “the excellency of the power is of God and not of us.”

But in considering the duties of members of the Christian Church as affected by the divine mission of the ministry, some also there are which devolve particularly upon those among whom this ministry is exercised. If the message be indeed of heavenly sending, it will follow that the importance of the word, and the authority under which it is communicated, demand respect and acquiescence, be the channel of the communication as

humble as it may. When the Apostle boldly affirms that his mission is "not of men neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father;" or when he says again, "let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God," he arrogates to himself no unwarranted authority, neither does he above measure magnify his office. The repeated injunctions to a similar effect which recur so frequently in his epistles to various churches, have lost none of their force as applicable to the laity of these latter ages. And although from the lapse of time they may not possess a strictly literal reference to the circumstances of our day, their spirit is still unaltered and the same. The duty, now as then, is binding upon every member of the church, not only to receive with meekness, but moreover each in his degree to facilitate the currency and extension, not merely of the Christian doctrines generally, but of that form of doctrine also of which he professes himself the disciple.

In societies comprehensive and extended as the several Christian Churches have become, and amid the complicated variety of interests necessarily arising out of their growth and extension, objects and difficulties will from time to time arise, which it will require the co-operation of every one of their members fully to meet. And hence it is that of all the black and threatening features

which combine to cloud the aspect of the times, there is not one which is more alarming than that almost universal misapprehension of the relation in which they stand to their Church, and that consequent disregard of their duties towards her, which are so characteristic of the laity of the present day.

That which the policy and diligence of the Romish priesthood, continued throughout a long course of years of barbarism and of ignorance, could scarcely effect in persuading the Christian world that the Clergy were alone and in themselves the Church, would appear to be the received, at least the practical, doctrine of an age of intellect and refinement. But as reasonably might it be affirmed that the representative body is in itself the State ; and that the security of its interests and the efficient discharge of its functions are considerations therefore undeserving the attention of the general body politic.

But how different is the teaching of our Lord and his Apostles. "We being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."* All linked together under one head even Jesus Christ. All constituting in that communion one whole and closely compacted body. For the erection and conservation of such a body throughout all time, He was content to die ; that it might

* Rom. XII. 5. See also 1 Cor. XII. 14.—19.

abide a light to the world around, that it might be a medium of preserving from age to age, and that finally, by the power of his grace, it might extend throughout the world the precious deposit committed to its keeping, even the Gospel of Salvation.

The Church of England, as a branch of this universal Church, demands (as all societies whether secular or spiritual must do) that every member of her communion should co-operate in his degree to the promotion of their common object, and to the conservation of their common interests. Perhaps no more striking illustration can be found of the duties which our Church imposes upon all her members, than is furnished by the proceedings of this day. To this our synodical assembly she convenes not merely the clergy, but the lay representatives of the several congregations of the district. Releasing the officers of the preceding year from their duties, she calls others to succeed them as guardians of the secular interests of their Church, and as supporters also of ecclesiastical discipline not less as respects the Minister himself than the humblest member of his flock. The trust committed to the Churchwarden, in its spirit and extent, implies no less than this.*

* For the better maintenance of ecclesiastical discipline, other lay officers besides the Churchwardens were elected yearly in every parish under the title of *Questmen*, and others

It is then no fault of the constitution and polity of our Church if the Laity neglect to give efficiency to that share of her regulation and discipline to which she invites them, nay which she requires them to undertake.

I would take another instance, in the course which our Church adopts at the administration of her orders. By submitting the name of every candidate to the previous approbation of the lay people, she concedes to them a virtual negative on her ordinations. It seems, however, scarcely to again as *Sidemen* or assistants. These last do not appear to have been invested with any distinct office in their own right, and I should question the usual explanation of the name as a corruption of *Synod-man*. The Questmen appear to have been the real *testes synodales* or *juratores synodi*:—as it were Jurors or the sworn *Inquest-men*, by whom presentments were made to the Bishop in private at the episcopal see, or publicly at Synod. They are described as “*maturiores, honestiores, atque veraciores viri*,” appointed to give information upon oath concerning the manners of the people within their district of supervision. The nature and extent of their duties, as respected the Clergy, will appear from an Archiepiscopal constitution of very early date [A. D. MCCXXXVI.] which thus speaks—“*Sint in quolibet Decanatu duo vel tres viri, Deum habentes pro oculis, qui excessus publicos prælatorum et aliorum clericorum ad mandatum archiepiscopi vel ejus officialis, ipsis denuncient.*”—See Dansey’s *Horæ Decanice Rurales*, Part IV., Sec. iii., with the authorities there quoted, and Can. James I., 89, 90.

No sufficient authority appears to have been advanced for their opinion by those who attribute to these officers the duty of assisting the minister in his pastoral functions of teaching and visiting, or in any matters of a purely spiritual nature.

be remembered that a regulation is in existence, and is steadily enforced which requires that the names of persons aspiring to orders should be publicly announced in the congregations among whom they have resided, and that a representation of unworthiness from the people would destroy at once their hopes of admission to the ministry.*

If, in the lapse of time, these wisely devised measures have passed into mere forms; if the power of exclusion thus vested in the Laity has sunk into desuetude and disuse, let not the Church, in the spirit and constitution of her polity, be blamed. She at least has precluded laymen from the warrantable employment of this excuse for

* The solemn injunction laid upon the people by the Bishop, in commencing the ordination service, is too striking not to be remarked. They are enjoined "if there be any who knoweth any impediment or notable crime" in the persons about to be ordained to "come forth, in the name of God, and shew what the crime or impediment is." It were much to be desired that the laity had more frequent opportunities of being present at these most solemn services. I feel convinced that the devout and attentive witness of a single ordination would retire from the service under stronger impressions of the sacred relation between the clergy and the people, with feelings of deeper interest in his minister and of attachment to his Church, than after the perusal of volumes in defence of their divine institution. How much may be extracted from these services by an ordinary train of reflection is shewn in one of the numbers (the 12th) of "*Tracts for the Times*."

their indifference—that they are not concerned, because not consulted, in the measures of her discipline, or the regulation of her affairs. In fact, the laymen of the Church of England are no less politically and influentially members of her constitution as a society, than spiritually and essentially partakers in her communion as a branch of the universal Church of Christ. Nay, even there, where the Clergy might be expected to stand most especially alone and distinct; even in the conduct of her public services and her public worship, she has drawn the line of demarcation as little offensively as is consistent with the existence of any ordained ministry. Her priesthood pretend no claims to exclusive reverence as sacrificers for the sins of their flock; she does not reserve to them any distinctive portion in the sacramental emblems; content that they should remain the unworthy dispensers of the one great sacrifice once offered for all men, and associating both priest and people in the full communion of the blood as well as of the body of their crucified Redeemer.

Neither, on the other hand, does our Church, in the spirit of modern sectaries, exalt her ministers into mere preachers—the dogmatical expounders of the word of God. The spirit of her services is prayer. Valuable and important as the office of

the Preacher is, still the spirit of our services is prayer—united, mutual, common Prayer.* Her Liturgy bespeaks no undue pre-eminence in the clergy; the language of her absolution is declaratory, as well of the indispensable conditions as of His gracious will, through whose power and by whose commandment they exercise this delegated function. And finally, the station in which they officiate is only so much elevated above the people as is required for the audible expression of their common wants and common supplications.†

* The difficulty of finding men duly qualified for the office of Preachers immediately after the Reformation, was no doubt one great reason for the drawing up the Book of Homilies. But even as late as the commencement of the seventeenth century, by which time an educated ministry had arisen, we find a Canon embodying a strong censure of those who declined receiving the Sacraments at the hands of "a Minister that is no Preacher * * * *as though the virtue of those Sacraments did depend upon his ability to preach.*" Can. James I., 57.

† The contentions and diversities of practice which arose in the times immediately succeeding the Reformation, rendered it necessary to assign some definitive rule for these minute points, and hence in "the order for morning and evening Prayer," it is directed that it "shall be used in the accustomed place of the Church, Chapel, or Chancel." The views which originally dictated the choice of this *accustomed place* will appear from a rubrick of an earlier date. "The morning and evening Prayer shall be used in such places of the Church, Chapel, or Chancel, and the Minister shall so turn *as the people may best hear.*"—*Second Book of King Edward VI.*, 1552.

And yet the Church of England is railed at as an exclusive Church. She does, indeed, withhold all matters purely spiritual from lay cognizance. She does, indeed, reserve the dispensation of the word and sacraments to those alone, whose fitness being duly ascertained and tried, she has accredited to the people by her orders. Less strictness than this she could not exercise without a manifest departure from her duty as a faithful "witness"* of God's word, and an organ of true doctrine unto the people. In her secular affairs however, in her discipline, in all that she derives "from men" and enjoys "by man," she associates the Laity with her Clergy to an extent unknown to other churches, pretending the least adherence to primitive models.†

Surely then, our Church has a right to demand that every one of her sons, in his degree, should lend his support in the hour of difficulty; or to require that he will renounce the name when he fails in the duties of a churchman. That which, in reference to the state at large, is

* See article XX.

† The founders of our ecclesiastical polity evidently endeavoured to frame it in the same free spirit which pervades the civil institutions of the nation, agreeably to the direction of that canon of the Council of Chalcedon—*Τῶς πολιτικοῖς καὶ δημοσίοις τύποις καὶ τῶν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν παροικιῶν ἡ τάξις ἀκολουθεῖται*. The analogy of the ecclesiastical and civil constitutions is ingeniously drawn out in Kennett's *Parochial Antiquities* quoted by Dansey, *ubi supra*. Part II. Sec. ii.

designated either as patriotism or as public spirit (call it by what name you may in reference to the Church), this feeling she may fairly expect every member of her congregations to manifest. For many points there are, of merely secular interest, which the Clergy, as such, cannot assert or maintain. Our weapons are not carnal, they are adapted to other warfare than the din of worldly interests, and to other ends than the struggle for secular distinctions. But it is the duty of the Laity of her communion (if they feel for the Church that attachment which they profess) to take care that she is not prostrated to the level of the factious and discordant sects by which she is on every side assailed ; to be watchful that the pillars of our temple be not all removed, and the civil bulwarks of our establishment all undermined.

And you, my reverend Brethren, if you would awaken in your several congregations this interest and this attachment to the welfare of our common Church ; if you would see them identify her prosperity with their own, and would have them act as becomes the members, the responsible members of her body ; if you would see them act as men looking up with ourselves to one common head, even Jesus Christ,—I can suggest to you no surer means than all of you already know, than you already, in your several charges, are exerting ; no

other means would I suggest than those which the book of God's own word prescribes for your direction ; to no other quarter would I turn, for to none other does our Church direct her ministers to turn for guidance and for aid in this most trying day of her visitation.

These means, however tardy in their operation they may appear to our feeble sight, these cannot fail of ultimate success, for these are "not of men neither by man;" these the bitterest adversary dare not gainsay, for they are "from Jesus Christ and God the Father." She warns you for yourselves that ye "ought and have need to pray for God's holy spirit" that ye "may wax riper and stronger in your ministry." She bids you be "instant both in season and out of season," "as well by public as private monitions and exhortations to teach the people committed to your cure and charge"* in all the doctrine and discipline of Christ.

She bids you, as her commissioned ministers, to be zealous not only in avowing, but in demonstrating by your lives and daily conduct, a disinterested care for their greatest, their final welfare. A care distinct from the mere anxiety to enlist partizans, or to swell her ranks with nominal adherents ; but a sincere, a genuine, and (through Christ), an effectual anxiety for their only true and

* Ordination Service.

eternal interests. Thus will you silently and imperceptibly kindle within their hearts an attachment to that church which has proved to them the channel of so many blessings. And thus will they be led to reciprocate the benefits they have themselves experienced by calling others to join them in the same communion, whose gratitude in turn will spread itself to an extended and yet more widely extending circle.

By these means, and by means like these, we doubt not that the cause of the Church of England will be powerfully upheld, maintained, and promoted; and that she will still assert that ascendancy in the land which has rendered her the fruitful source of mercies and of blessings to our favoured people.

But in that struggle unto which her Clergy seem to be well nigh committed—let the issue be what it may as concerns our secular interests and our temporal ascendancy—that issue we must patiently abide, in humble reliance on the will of Him whose wise design it may be to submit our Church to this ordeal that He may purify her as a yet more glorious instrument in the work of man's salvation.

Be the issue of this struggle what it may, our Church (through the wisdom and power of the Lord) will never shrink from her high trust as a faithful “keeper and witness” of the oracles of

God's word. She will be ready now in the day of her visitation, as she ever proved herself in the times of her peace, alike to uphold the supremacy of the written word above the traditionary adjuncts of the Romanist, as to vindicate its integrity from the audacious mutilations of the Rationalist.

Finally, Brethren, we can entertain no fears of the perpetuity of that Faith whereof it is our chiefest glory to be the ordained ministers. We cannot suffer ourselves to apprehend that in the defence of that truth which she has set forth in her Creeds, in her Liturgy, and in her Articles, the Church of England should want her a man to stand forth before the Lord for ever. For these, Brethren, we know and feel and can affirm to be "not of men neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father."

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A
DISCOURSE,
PREACHED IN SALISBURY CATHEDRAL,
ON
KING CHARLES'S MARTYRDOM,

M.DCCC.XXXVI.

BY
THE REV. WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES, A.M.,
CANON RESIDENTIARY OF SARUM.

"In other things, I will take no man's liberty of judgment from him;
neither shall any man take mine from me;—and what measure I mete
to others, I expect from them again."—CHILLINGWORTH.

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TO
I. D'ISRAELI, ESQ., LL.D.,
THE MOST JUST AND IMPARTIAL HISTORIAN
OF THE LIFE AND TIMES OF CHARLES THE FIRST,
THIS DISCOURSE IS INSCRIBED,
WITH SENTIMENTS OF AFFECTIONATE
RESPECT AND ESTEEM,
BY
W. L. BOWLES.

CANONRY HOUSE, SARUM,
MARCH 1, 1836.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Discourse was delivered in Salisbury Cathedral—not from choice, but according to my canonical turn. The sentiments there delivered, I now publish, neither condemning the opinions, religious or political, of others, nor fearing—whilst liberty of opinion remains—to avow my own.

Facts will justify me in all I have said respecting the two opposite systems of religious belief in this country: that of the Church of Rome, with its human traditions—and that austere school of Calvinistic Divinity, which had its origin at Geneva;—but as to any reflections on any individuals of either community, I should as soon seek to rob them of their goods, as harshly condemn them on account of that conscientious belief, from the profession of which, either of them derives tranquillity or consolation;—nor would I trespass even on that tranquillity one atom farther than would be absolutely necessary for the explanation and vindication of my own conscientious belief.

SARUM, MARCH 1, 1836.

ERRATA.

Page 2, line 13, for " brought their King to the scaffold of a bloody and public execution," read, " brought their King to a bloody and public execution on the scaffold."

Page 5, line 4, for " dreams," read " legends."

Page 9, line 13, for " inspired," read " fanatic."

KING CHARLES'S MARTYRDOM.

PSALM LV. 6.

OH THAT I HAD WINGS LIKE A DOVE, FOR THEN
WOULD I FLEE AWAY, AND BE AT REST.

THERE is so intimate a connexion between the fate of King Charles the First and our Ecclesiastical Establishment, that I shall be excused, before I enter on the sad scene of his sufferings, if I make some observations on the state of civil and religious animosities in this kingdom, which led the way to that deplorable event we are called upon to commemorate this day. In pursuance of so interesting a subject, we may observe, that there are two solemn services appended to our Book of Common Prayer, which appear, at first sight, not exactly in unison with the spirit of charity which breathes throughout the whole of that admirable compilation. I

B

particularly allude to two services which relate to widely different events—one, consummated as on this day—the other, providentially frustrated. These two services were occasioned by two religious parties in the State, each most hostile to the other, and agreeing only in hate to our more tolerant Establishment. The services to which I allude more especially, are those appointed to be performed on the Fifth of November, and on this day of annual humiliation, to pray to the God of mercy, and to deprecate his judgment on a nation which brought their King to the scaffold of a bloody and public execution.

Of the former party, those who meditated that tragical event, called the Popish Conspiracy, I shall say very little more than that the circumstance is believed on credible historical evidence ; * but it will be my object, on this occasion—first, to make some comments on the service appended to the Prayer Book, and appointed for **THIS DAY**—secondly, to give a brief sketch of the state of religious discord in this country, which led to the sad event—and, lastly,

* It were, in my opinion, better, on many accounts, if the veil of forgetfulness were thrown over a meditated crime, however enormous ; for we may believe, that, whilst reading and writing remain, this religion cannot, at least in its terrific domination, be revived in this country.

to draw your attention to the picture of the subdued and desolate King, at the latter part of his reign of sorrow—and to show what reason he had,—his enemies now advancing with louder menace against him,—to exclaim, in the bitterness of his soul, “Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I flee away, and be at rest.”

As to the first point of consideration, let us remember, that the service for this day is appended to the Prayer Book, *not* to imprecate vengeance on the sinners, but to “implore
“the mercy of God, that neither the guilt of
“blood, nor those other sins by which God was
“provoked to deliver up both us and our KING
“into the hands of cruel and unreasonable men,
“may, at any time hereafter, be visited upon
“us or our posterity.”

Nor let it be forgotten, as to the propriety of this service being appended to our Book of Common Prayer, in daily use, that it was on account of the unhappy King's firm attachment to our Episcopal form of worship, and to **THIS VERY BOOK**, next to the **WORD OF GOD**, the chief consolation of his solitary sorrows—that this storm was raised up so furiously against him, and therefore it was not unreasonable, that to this Book, which had been the object of peculiar rancour in those unhappy times—it is not

unreasonable that to this very Book should be appended the solemn service on account of his sufferings—sufferings in the cause of our Episcopal communion, and the calm but affecting and sublime ritual of our public prayers. To both religious parties in the State, of whom I have spoken, this Book was peculiarly the object of hate:—to the first, because it contained *not* ONE WORD of the dreams of human tradition—not one word of *unscriptural* legends and tales—*not* one name of *one* Saint which is not found in the Bible—not any allusion to *one* miracle which had not the Word of God as the voucher for its truth! They who objected to the Prayer Book, on this account, were of the angry and defeated Church of Rome. On the other hand, they who hated, as inveterately, this calm and scriptural form of prayers, were actuated by the spirit of obloquy and hatred, because it retained *any* of those Collects and ancient Prayers—*any* of those sublime compositions—*any* of those pathetic supplications, which may be presumed—if it could not be proved—from their apostolic simplicity, to have been derived from the uncorrupted Christian Church—being such as must affect every unprejudiced understanding, and every Christian heart, from their simplicity and beauty.

Truth and charity generally stand between

two extremes, which was the case of the sober and scriptural Church of England between the Churches of Rome and Geneva—eschewing alike the *dreams* of the one, and the *dogmas* of the other.—How “ungodly and unreasonable” these later enthusiasts were may be proved by facts: for their fury was not only directed against the Prayer Book—but against Bishops—against all Cathedral services—and even against Cathedrals themselves, as being the nests of Popish defilement.*

As to the Prayer Book, it was in vain that the utmost caution and prudence were observed by the pious compilers of those selected prayers, for nothing could satisfy these “unreasonable” judges, and fanatical detractors. This spirit of hatred to our Episcopal form of worship had grown up among these men since the times of Edward VI., the real era of the Reformation. The same hostile spirit was manifested through the long reign of Elizabeth. It attained further strength, though more disguised, under James I.; and it showed its undisguised

* “*Video plures tolerabiles ineptias,*” says the defender of “Reprobation,” a word not in the Bible of God, but in the Bible of the Popish schoolmen! It remained for the Protestant Doctor of Geneva to revive the word, and draw ten thousand more horrid consequences than ever entered into the thought of the *angelic* Doctor Aquinas.

features, and attained its gloomy but gigantic strength, in the reign of the unfortunate Sovereign whose untimely fall is the subject of this day's solemnity. By a stricter profession of austere piety, these men,—nurtured, during the bloody reign of Mary, in a foreign school of Divinity,—imposed on the more serious amongst us, and on none more than some eminently pious English Bishops,* one of whom, not suspecting their main object, survived to write the celebrated work called “Hard Fare.” Hard fare, indeed, to him ! when, by these men, who, as he thought, professed religious doctrines akin to his own, he was despoiled of all he had in the world—when his Episcopal Palace and even his books were burnt, and he himself left in his old age to indigence and sorrow, indignities and insult, till his “grey hairs, were brought with sorrow to the grave.”

In Scotland, this fanatic frenzy went forth

* Such as Davenant and Hall, who had been deputed to the Synod of Dort, where “*Reprobation*” was *discussed*, and the aged Barneveldt, not being a *reprobator*, was led to the block ; while the mild and learned Grotius with difficulty escaped the same death, not *exactly* believing that the God of mercy *caused myriads and myriads to be born* for no other reason than to *show his mercy*, in “*reprobating*” them to eternal tortures ! “*In contumeliam, et pœnam nati !*” cries the exulting Calvin.—*Calvin's Institutes*.

unrestrained, under the stern Knox, and only two of those beautiful buildings raised by pious and munificent ancestors, remain now entire, and one of these in the “most wintry Isle of the North Seas,”* left as it were to sigh to its “own wild winds,” instead of re-echoing to the choral service—thus lamenting, as it were, the fate of all similar beautiful and sacred edifices in that part of the united kingdom. The same object was the fixed and fanatic resolution of the same party in this kingdom. Both countries, therefore, entered into “a solemn league and covenant” to destroy Episcopacy “root and branch,” and, with Episcopacy, all its forms and services. Not only to the Cathedrals, but even to the chants, and sublime and affecting music of Cathedrals, they testified the same hatred—particularly to all music, except that which was applied to miserable metres, and was without harmony of parts; and truly, for the same reason, they might have decried the beautiful and blended hues of the rainbow.

The organ of this Church in which I am now speaking was beaten to pieces;† and the organist, the celebrated Henry Lawes, whose life

* Glasgow: St. Magnus, in the town of Kirkwall, in the Orkneys.

† This may be inferred from Duppa, after the Reformation, having left by will 500*l.* to the Bishop for an organ.

was as pure as his song, met the same "hard fare" as Bishop Duppa; but he lived to compose the anthem sung in Westminster Abbey, in the presence of the restored King, when every loyal heart throughout the realm seemed to reply to the affecting words of the Psalmist, "I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the house of the Lord."

It may seem strange that these men should have testified the same aversion to the calm, sober, but affecting compositions in our Prayer Book: but so it was. The book itself was an abomination! Not only in the Church, but in houses, the *private* use of it was strictly prohibited, under the severest penalties. Poor Chillingworth, the writer of the immortal sentence, "The Bible is the Religion of Protestants," closed his eyes without the hope of having the sublime and affecting funeral service in our Liturgy read, according to his dying request, over his remains.

Soon afterwards, the Bishops' lands were sold, and Episcopacy, "root and branch," in the language of the day, utterly destroyed. Presbyter was now become the HIGH Priest—and such a High Priest as neither *tolerated*, nor pretended to *tolerate*, *any* religion, or any colour of religion! Toleration, indeed, on any plea of the "rights of conscience," was, according to

these men, a *sin!**—in their own words, “as establishing iniquity by law.”†

But a cloud arose in an opposite quarter of the sky! Cromwell—whose motley army consisted of *all* Sects, of *all* creeds—*tolerated all*, and they who were ten thousand times more oppressive in their spiritual rule than the mild Hierarchy which they succeeded, were obliged, in their turn, to relinquish their solemn ascendancy, and both they, as well as the Episcopal Church, were brought to the same level of adversity: the Prayer Book and Directory‡ being alike tramp'd under the iron heel of the *inspired* soldiery.

Such was the state of religion in this country, when that Sovereign, who protected, till his death, that mild Hierarchy, standing majestic between the two opposite extremes of Rome and Geneva—the *infallible* Papist and *inflexible* Puritan—attached from his youth to its services, and its prayers, and its songs—was

* “New Presbyterian is but Old Priest wrote large.” Milton’s Sonnet on “The Forcers of Conscience.” The great crime of Cromwell, according to Clement Walker, was “*tolerating all accursed sects.*”* This writer, a stanch Presbyterian, in the House of Commons, did not find that *all sects* were tolerated, for a *Quaker* was most cruelly tortured; and Walker was sent to prison by Cromwell—where he died!

† See Rushworth—Parliamentary Declaration.

‡ Presbyterian Prayer Book.

* Clement Walker’s History of Independents.

brought, a spectacle, as on this day, and, I might say, in this cause, to the scaffold of blood.

I now proceed to speak more personally of him, whose sorrows and untimely death consummated the triumph of these his enemies, and the enemies of the Established Episcopal Church.

He was now a prisoner in the Isle of Wight—separated from his wife and children, his Clergy, and his friends. His only consolation was the New Testament, which was allowed him, and the Prayer Book of our venerable Church ritual, the more prized, as it had been sternly interdicted to his solitude and tears.

If there are those who think hardly of him as a King, let such remember the difficult, and arduous, and trying circumstances in which he was placed. Let them compare his public and private character with the Sovereigns before him—the loathsome and tyrannical Henry the Eighth, on whose head, if the storm had fallen, Mercy might have smiled by the side of Justice.* I pass over the youthful Edward, who stood graceful, ingenuous, and pious in the front of the Reformation. I need say little of the reigns or characters of the two sister-queens, Mary and Elizabeth—one the persecutor—the other, whose name is connected with her country's

* Southey.

glory, and the establishment of that scriptural and mild form of religion which King Charles died in supporting. I will only entreat of those, who condemn this sufferer, as a King, to compare his public character with that of those who preceded him on the Throne, and even with his immediate predecessor, the cold-blooded murderer of the accomplished Raleigh!—and if Charles the First is still to be condemned as a King, let those who so condemn him, remember his piety, his domestic virtues,—his affection for his children, his kindness and gentleness to all his attendants, his love and fidelity to the Altars of his faith,—and, at least, shed one tear of generous pity for him, as a most religiously faithful husband to that beautiful Queen who shared his heart and his sorrows! When the sternest judge thinks of these things, let him remember his later hours of utter desolation, separated from all he loved upon earth, in his gloomy prison-house, looking back—*not* on a perishable Crown, but dwelling, *more sadly*, as the long, lone night came down, on those tender relations which occupied all his thoughts, except those devoted to Heaven,—his only consolation being the New Testament, and that book of almost Divine breathings of prayer, to which has since been appended, the solemn service for his death. And here, if what I have said

may have excited a moment's commiseration for his fate, perhaps I might be able to excite some further interest, when I inform those who hear me, and who come to this place of worship with their Sabbath book of prayers, that the text I have chosen was selected from that identical Prayer Book which had been in the possession and constant use of this miserable King in captivity. From his own Prayer Book,*—in more frequent use, as his hours on earth appeared numbered, I chose this text—the page which contained this Psalm, opening accidentally—a proof how often he had communed with it in his solitude. This book, in the possession of King Charles in his prison, at the closing period of his life, must have been kept in secret; and when he was hurried away, it was left behind. I need not say how anxiously, how minutely I examined it. It is bound in black, and, though printed as long ago as 1637, it appears as if it had been but yesterday in the pale hand of him, who has lain in his quiet grave for nearly 200 years. It is evident how intently his heart must have communed on those particular passages, which even now most readily presented themselves, though so many years had passed

* Belonging to Dr. Pearson, the Dean of Salisbury, inherited from his mother, with some other articles, left behind in Carisbrooke Castle.

away. One page, which thus presented itself, contained *two prayers*, not retained in our common Prayer Book. On what subjects were these most pathetic prayers?—One, “For patience in trouble:”—the other, “A prayer to be said IN THE HOUR OF DEATH!”

These circumstances show how deeply such sad thoughts, at this period, occupied his heart. Among the Psalms, that Psalm from which the text is taken, appears to have been, from the circumstance I have mentioned, very frequently the subject of his mournful meditations, being, indeed, most peculiarly applicable to his fate.

I shall read some verses, from which you may judge. Let us take the first, and five following verses of Psalm 55:—

1. “Hear my prayer, oh God, and hide not thy face from my petition.

2. “Take heed unto me, and hear me; how I mourn in my prayer, and am vexed.

3. “The *ungodly* cometh on so fast, and the *enemy* crieth so.”

At this time, it was voted in Parliament, that no more petitions were to be received from him; and now remark what follows in the verse:—“For they are minded to do me *some mischief*, so *maliciously* are they set against me.”

Now it was he began to think his life in immediate danger; for the Psalm goes on—

“ My heart is *disquieted* within me, and the *fear of death* is fallen upon me, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me.” And then, despairing of human aid, in the bitterness of his soul, we think we hear the pathetic exclamation from his trembling lips, “ Oh that I had wings like a dove ! for then would I flee away, and be at rest.

“ Lo, then would I get me afar off, and remain in the wilderness. I would make haste to escape, because of the stormy wind and tempest.”

But the most remarkable words follow after, verse 12, &c. :—“ For it was not an open *enemy* that hath done me this dishonour ; for then I could have borne it.

“ Neither was it *mine adversary* that did *magnify himself* against me : for then peradventure I would have hid myself from him.

“ But it was even *thou*, my companion, my guide, and my own familiar friend.

“ We took sweet counsel together : and walked in the house of God as friends.”

It was not the *open* Infidel—the professed Atheist—the ancient enemy of the Protestant Faith, the Church of Rome—it was Protestant persecuting Protestant ! He, who appeared at first as a *friend*, who deceived with flattering words, with whom he “ walked in the House of

God," for a time—it was HE who thus "*magnified* himself against him." King Charles could not have read this Psalm from THE BIBLE, for he had only the New Testament in his possession : it could only, therefore, have been read from this book.

In connexion with the subject of the Liturgy of our Church being prohibited, let me remark, that, in the meditations, said to have been composed by the King himself, called "The Portraiture of his Majesty in his Sufferings,"* that prayer, which most affects every compassionate heart, is the prayer supposed to have been written by Duppa, Bishop of this Diocese, on the occasion of the Liturgy being denied, and this Bishop, with his other Chaplains, being forbidden to attend his disconsolate master.

And here, again, another subject demands particular notice, relative to that melancholy service in our Liturgy composed on account of the death he foreboded.

Many, in reading this service, have conceived, very naturally, that there was something almost profane, when the Lesson appointed to be read was that chapter of Saint Matthew, which details at length the judgment and crucifixion of our Redeemer, this chapter having been,

* Life of Ken, by the Author.

as might be imagined, so selected, as if there could be supposed the least resemblance or analogy between the sufferings of a mortal man, though a King, and the sufferings of Him who bowed his head on the Cross, to take away the sins of the world !

Attend ! The Lesson was not, and *could* not have been selected with any thought of this intention, as it is the appointed Lesson for the day of the month, which any one may see, by looking at the calendar. And such was the observation of the King's Chaplain, Juxon, who attended him, as his last mournful duty, on the scaffold of death.*

Thus this particular Lesson might rather be supposed to have been pointed out by the finger of God, as if to condemn, from age to age, hypocrisy and blood-guiltiness : for it is well known, that they who planned and executed this deed of blood, when any crime more atrocious than ordinary was to be perpetrated, pretended and pleaded that they had been " seeking the Lord ! " But it appeared, in this instance, that they had not been " seeking the Lord " in his Word : for, they would not have selected that day for execution on which this chapter was

* I have, in the " Life of Bishop Ken," given some reasons for thinking, that the idea of a grand public spectacle of national Justice, was the suggestion of Milton to Cromwell.

appointed to be read; but, having proscribed the Prayer Book, they never thought of the ancient calendar prefixed, and whenever this chapter is read, it testifies aloud against hypocrisy and blood.

I now approach the concluding act of this tragedy. The axe is in the masked executioner's hands—the last prayer is said—there is a stillness, as of death—the axe descends—the blood streams—there is silence again—tears and audible sobs follow—and all earthly trials are ended.

But I cannot leave this sad scene without saying a word respecting the funeral of him, who, after his lot of no common sorrow upon earth, was conveyed to his long, and last, repose. The corpse (having been delivered to some faithful friends*) was conveyed to the resting-place of Kings, in the Cathedral Chapel of Windsor. The black pall of the coffin was covered with snow. It was in the depth of night: a grave was dug in the centre of the Cathedral aisle, and there—lighted by a few trembling tapers—the body of the King was laid in consecrated earth—without the prayers of the Ritual.

He was brought to this untimely grave—not with solemn funeral rites—but in sad silence.

* Mr. Herbert, &c. (afterwards Sir Thomas), who never left his side till all was over. He wrote the affecting Memoirs of his last days, and wept over his grave.

They who laid him in earth, only breathed a few words; and then left the long aisles of the Cathedral, echoing again to the winds of winter without.

A few years afterwards, the Lord Protector Cromwell was also borne to the abode of mortal corruption,—but how different the pomp of death! He who had ruled, with far more than kingly power, was buried with far more than kingly magnificence.

The spot, where the remains of this unfortunate King lay, was not known, or at least forgotten, in the thoughtless reign of the Restoration, when revelry and unrestrained licence, as extremes follow extremes, succeeded the gloomy dominion of the fanatic. In the midst of scenes of dissipation, Charles the Second was smitten, and the cup of licentious pleasure was dashed from his palsied hand.

Another reign succeeded, when the brother of Charles, having proved a traitor to his trust, was exiled, and died in a foreign land. Another Prince is called to the throne—another dynasty succeeds—George the First, George the Second succeed, and George the Third, who, in his lifetime, being, from infirmity and age, obliged to lay down the sceptre, was succeeded by a Prince Regent, afterwards George the Fourth, now also gone down to the grave with his ancestors. It was during his Regency, in digging out a place

of rest for an illustrious departed relative, a coffin was discovered, with a silver plate, inscribed, "King Charles," having the date, 1648. By the Regent's permission, the coffin was taken up, and the sad remains of this martyred King submitted to inspection. The body, having been embalmed, the head was found attached to it with cerement. The beard appeared exactly as in the common pictures. The countenance still placid—the eyes for a moment open, as if to reproach those who disturbed the long repose of the dead, and the next moment they collapsed into dust. One lock of hair was severed from the head. This last relic of a man of sorrow I myself saw, with what feelings I need not say.*

The King has been described, in the time of his captivity, as having his hair changed, from anxiety, to premature grey: on the contrary, this lock, cut from his head nearly 200 years after his interment, was of the most perfect auburn, such as in his youth, and first days of nuptial happiness.

I here pause:—Having, from my public duty, been called upon to preach on this subject, I have endeavoured to speak, as I hope, without offence to others, the sentiments of a faithful member of the Established Church.

* This lock of hair was shown to me by Sir Henry Halford, who has published the interesting account.

I have spoken of a sad event, which took place in troubled times. We may live to see troubled times again, but never, I trust, in this kingdom, to witness such an event.

I make no *political* application, for, any thing political, at this awful moment, must be unworthy this place, and I am sure would be remote from my own heart. As the great Council of the Nation is now again assembled, may it be assembled under happier auspices than that reforming Parliament, in the seventeenth century, which led the way to the destruction of that purest form of Apostolic Catholic Worship established in this kingdom, and, eventually, to the melancholy scene which was the cause of this day's solemnity. And now, looking round on this ancient and beautiful Temple, and having heard the pealing chant, or the affecting anthem, let us pray to the Disposer of all events—whoever be the leader of these Councils,—HUMBLY PRAY, in the language of our once-proscribed Liturgy (as dear to us, as our Fathers), that “ALL THINGS
“MAY BE SO ORDERED AND SETTLED BY THEIR
“ENDEAVOURS, UPON THE BEST AND SUREST
“FOUNDATIONS, THAT PEACE AND HAPPINESS,
“TRUTH AND JUSTICE, RELIGION AND PIETY,
“MAY BE ESTABLISHED AMONG US FOR ALL
“GENERATIONS.” AMEN.

Now to God, &c.

NOTE to p. 8.

The Author has just placed in the Cathedral to which he belongs, a monument to the memory of William Chillingworth, with the following inscription :

“ The BIBLE
is the RELIGION of PROTESTANTS.”

To the Memory of WILLIAM CHILLINGWORTH, the immortal Author
of the words inscribed above, and formerly Chancellor of this Church, who,
after he had confuted by irresistible force of reasoning the arguments,
and exposed the sophistries,* of the most astute among the writers of
the Church of Rome, was buried at Chichester without the
Funeral Service of our Liturgy, A. D. 1643.

Christian charity shrinks from a recital of the indignities offered to his
Remains by one of the Leaders of that Genevan School of Divinity, which
proscribed the use of the Book of Common Prayer, destroyed Episcopacy, and
prostrated for a season the Established Religion of this Kingdom.

This Tablet is placed in his own Cathedral, in reverence to so great and
good a Man, by WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES, Canon Residentiary,

A. D. 1836.†

* “ I found every where colours that might deceive the simple ; but nothing that might persuade, and very little that might move an understanding man, and one that can discern between discourse and sophistry.”—CHILLINGWORTH.

† The monument (situated in the south-east transept of the Cathedral) is of Gothic design, richly ornamented with paneling and foliage, by OSMOND, Sculptor, Sarum.

TO BE PUBLISHED,
DISCOURSES preached at Bowood Chapel, and in Salisbury Cathedral, on subjects of Six of the Cartoons of Raphael, copies of which, in painted glass, were presented by King William the Fourth to the Marquess of Lansdowne, for the windows of his Chapel. Two of these Discourses, Paul in Cyprus, and Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, may be had at the Printer's.

ALSO,
MEMORIALS OF CHILLINGWORTH.

SALISBURY:
W. E. BRODIE AND CO., CANAL.

TWO DISCOURSES
ON
THE DOCTRINE
OF
BAPTISMAL REGENERATION,

BY
PIERS EDMUND BUTLER, B. A.

CURATE OF ST. MARGARET'S, IPSWICH.

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1836.

PRICE SIXPENCE.



DISCOURSE I.

JOHN iii. 5.

“Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

ON the subject of baptism an opinion is well known to exist, which, although less widely diffused in the present than in preceding ages, and evidently waning without a likelihood of recovering its former prevalence, appears of sufficient importance even now, to merit attention from those who have at heart the interests of vital religion. It is believed by not a few, who are far from indecorous neglect of serious subjects, and it has been taught by men eminent in dignity and in literary power, that the baptismal rite, regularly administered by the hands of a regularly appointed religious functionary, is uniformly attended with a change of a spiritual nature and saving tendency—a change even to baptized infancy secured by the solemn covenant of Almighty God. If this doctrine be true, it may safely be pronounced one of the most important verities, one of the most stupendous mysteries, of our religion—if it be erroneous, we may confidently aver that error more palpable, or more perilous, has rarely been appended to the form of Christianity. To give

a sketch of all that has been advanced by the advocates of baptismal regeneration would extend the present discourse far beyond its proper limits. It will be enough for our purpose to mention the considerations which have been most plausibly urged on their side.

“Without spiritual regeneration (say they) no salvation can be inherited. But the express testimony of Revelation warrants us in limiting the period of this change to the present life exclusively. At the same time we are, by similar authority, encouraged to believe that baptized and dying infants are saved. It appears inevitably to follow that in every such instance a spiritual regeneration has been effected—and what occasion so appropriate for this change as the administration of an ordinance whereby it is outwardly represented? In baptism, therefore, is every infant in the most exalted sense born again. It is true that the grace conferred on that occasion may be resisted, like any other divine influence, and even finally vanquished and eradicated—but this circumstance cannot invalidate the previous reality of grace, nor the general benefit of the ordinance.” In stating these arguments, I have purposely omitted mention of the peculiar views relative to the Christian Ministry, and to the Christian Church, which are usually found associated with the belief of baptismal regeneration. The mention of them here would unnecessarily break in on the unity of our subject, since the refutation which I have undertaken may proceed without it—and moreover it might possibly wear the appearance of a wish to throw superfluous obloquy on opinions, which a sense of duty alone induces me to publicly call in question. Let me add that to decry the ordinance of baptism, as unimportant in itself, or inappli-

cable to infancy, is utterly distant from my intention. It is my earnest desire to vindicate the character of the ordinance, and its just application to our children ; to guard against *the abuse of it* appears to my conviction one of the most essential means for the attainment of such an end. •

An inquirer of *mature age* sought in the secrecy of night the proscribed and persecuted Saviour of mankind. At once did Jesus enter freely with him on the great truths which he lived to proclaim, and died to substantiate—with wonted solemnity declaring, and urging, the necessity of a total change in the sinner's soul, figuratively equivalent to being born again, in order to his final safety ; and at the same time intimating the duty of receiving the rite significant of that change, and appointed as a visible distinction of *his* disciples from those of error in her various forms. He pointed out likewise the universal issue of that change, in a cordial reliance on his own dying expiation, as the only firm foundation of a sinner's peace with God. Such is evidently *the tenor* of the whole passage in which the language of our Lord to the Hebrew teacher stands recorded. What is there in all this that countenances the doctrine of a spiritual regeneration of *infants* at baptism ? If scriptural evidence of such a doctrine exist, it must be found elsewhere. It is not a reasonable supposition that would represent our Redeemer, in a conversation with an inquiring Rabbi, whose manifest object was the spiritual benefit of the inquirer, to have abruptly turned aside for the purpose of laying down certain positions touching the baptism and regeneration of *infants*.

“ But the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, (it will be contended) although not directly inculcated in the

passage under consideration, may be inferentially drawn from it. Salvation is no less indispensable for the dying infant, than for one who leaves the world in mature age. But spiritual regeneration and the baptismal rite, are expressly affirmed by our Redeemer to be indispensibly necessary to salvation—consequently in this life, in which alone can the rite be administered and the change experienced, every dying infant who goes to a heavenly inheritance, must partake of the one and the other.” Let this reasoning be applied in another instance, precisely parallel, and its fallacy will at once appear. “The necessity of *repentance* in order to salvation, is expressly taught in Scripture. ‘Except ye repent, ye shall all perish.’ The indissoluble connection between *faith* and salvation is no less plainly laid down—‘without faith it is impossible to please God.’ But salvation is confessedly a blessing desirable for infant and adult alike. Hence they who depart from the deathbed of infancy to the heavenly inheritance, must undergo the process of repentance, and exercise the principle of faith, ere they pass the limits of the present life—the only appointed season for the birthtime of repentance and of faith.” The absurdity of such a conclusion is self-evident, and demonstrates unsoundness in the principle of reasoning which conducted to it. Certain things are in general expressions declared by Divine authority to be indispensable preliminaries in this life to eternal salvation in another; and the fact is altogether forgotten that these declarations are made in Scripture *with a particular reference*, beyond which it is not lawful for human authority to extend them. Just as the necessity of faith and repentance, in order to eternal salvation, is inculcated with an obvious reference *to persons alone*

who have reached the years of responsibility, so were the declarations of our Lord to Nicodemus, on the subject of regeneration, unquestionably made *with a similar reference*. It may possibly be replied that, "the declarations of Scripture concerning the necessity of repentance and faith are limited, by the very nature of the case, to those who are capable of repenting and believing; while the declarations of Scripture concerning the necessity of spiritual regeneration are unaffected by any such limitation, infants at any period being, equally with persons of mature age, capable of the latter process." This is, however, to take for granted a link essential in the chain of argument, and which to my mind appears totally untenable; as I shall hereafter attempt to prove.

Meanwhile be it observed how a total oversight of the irresponsible condition of infancy is implied in all the arguments I have hitherto been employed in refuting. It is true we cannot with unerring precision mark out the line which separates, in the view of Omniscience, between the responsible condition and the irresponsible; yet can we undoubtingly lay our lands on a department, at one side of it, where responsibility exists; and on a department, at the other side of it, where responsibility does not exist. Voluntary agency, the development of conscience, the possession of knowledge or available means for acquiring it, all confessedly enter, more or less, into the elements of a responsible condition. Every one can point out a period of human life in which these elements of responsibility coexist; and every one will admit, with no more hesitation, their absence during infancy. It is a fact, indeed, that mankind at the earliest stage of life are exposed to that mortality which is certain at the

latest; and this fact may seem to indicate that our native depravity, in its undeveloped embryo, as in its mature expansion, alike lies under the burden of Divine displeasure. But be it remembered, that death, as it reigns in our world, is the necessary offspring of natural causes, whose operation nothing short of miracle could uniformly suspend in favor of infancy. Those causes have undoubtedly been awakened by the hand of sin, without whose entrance into our world, we are forbidden by all we know of Deity to imagine, that suffering could have been permitted to enter it. Viewing the existing reign of death in connection with the moral government of God, (as we are led by his word to view it) we must, however, consider it as an expression of Divine displeasure *against our fallen race*, rather than as the penal retribution of *individual sin*; since the stroke of mortality is permitted to fall even on the tender thread of infant life, with which the elements of responsibility, and the bonds of guilt, have not yet become intertwined. We are not warranted in harbouring any hope that to responsible humanity the various degrees of light, and opportunities of spiritual amelioration, vouchsafed and abused in the present life, shall be continued in another—to mature impiety, to personal guilt, “he limiteth a certain day.” But neither are we warranted in applying this limitation beyond those to whom God has applied it, “who to day will not hear his voice (in Revelation, or in nature), and who harden their own hearts.” We cannot conceive of Divine Justice, as bound to lengthen out indefinitely the rejected opportunities of mature responsibility and personal guilt; neither can we conceive of Divine Justice, as dealing alike with the case of a responsible, and with the essentially different case of an irrespon-

sible, condition. To adult humanity the day of salvation is *now*, because the day of responsibility is *now*; but they who have died in infancy saw no day of responsibility here, and shall therefore see a day of salvation hereafter.

Such is, in fact, the implied testimony of our Redeemer himself—"suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." (Luke xviii. 16.) Partly invisible in the minds of its subjects, the kingdom of God is partly visible in the simple ordinances by which they are congregated in external communion. Between the invisible kingdom of God, and the visible, there is, therefore, a distinction. We learn from Scripture that a credible profession of the Christian faith constitutes a just title of admission into the latter; and a very high probability induces us to believe that not only the professor himself, but his children likewise, are admissible by that single title. We read of whole families baptized on the parents becoming converts to Christianity. But man cannot read the heart; profession may be insincere, or may be based on self-delusion; the children of unsound professors are not likely to be trained in the knowledge and habits of piety—even good men may neglect the spiritual education of their offspring, and impede the descent upon them of a blessing conditionally promised. Thus in more ways than one the visible kingdom of God may, and actually does, become chequered by the intermixture of the good and the evil. From this the invisible kingdom of God is alone secured; by the very nature of whose limits the unclean are excluded from them for ever. It is then a great error to imagine that admission into the latter must, in every instance,

coincide with admission into the former. Into one the door is the baptismal rite—and this the hand of man may open; into the other the door is a change of heart—and this can be opened only by the hand of God. Hence we are not warranted in concluding that an infant, duly baptized, has, *at the same time*, been savingly regenerated.

“But (it may be demanded) is baptism to be separated from the change it represents—the appointed rite severed from the promised blessing? Must it be reduced to an idle ceremony, an unsubstantial shadow?”

Baptism in mature age *is* separated, and, *by the very nature of the case necessarily* separated, from the change it represents. The adult candidate for admission into the visible kingdom of God, pleads, virtually, a previous reception into the invisible. He, like the treasurer of Candace, makes solemn profession of belief in the great essential verities of our religion; without such a profession on his part, his reception would be sanctioned by no recorded example in the New Testament, and would be condemned by its evident tenor. Now we know of the faith so professed, that if genuine, “it is the gift of God,” (Ephes. ii. 8.) the creation of his regenerating spirit in the soul. (John xvi. 8—11.) Hence the adult baptized is regarded as *before baptism* spiritually regenerate; and, if in his profession of belief he has neither deceived others, nor deluded himself, he actually is so. Baptism, in this case, (inferior in importance to no other) is scripturally separate from the saving regeneration represented by it. Nor do we thus fritter away adult baptism to a mere unfruitful form. We believe that to him who, in the exercise of faith, administers, or receives, or witnesses, the ordinance, the Holy Spirit

is present, augmenting consolation, deepening conviction, invigorating principle, by its instrumentality. Nor do we fritter away infant baptism to a mere ceremony. We believe that, here too, the Divine presence is vouchsafed to all who, in the exercise of faith, unite in observing the ordinance; and that on the unconscious recipient, although no present yet *a prospective benefit*, is conferred—if the blessed themes connected with baptism be subsequently inculcated on one thus become a privileged member of the *visible* kingdom of God. And are not half the benefits conferred on childhood by the hands of parental wisdom and love prospective benefits? We consider infant-baptism one among other *subordinate means* toward the attainment of a high and heavenly end—the ultimate salvation of our offspring. We present them before God, covered with our prayers, our sighs, and our tears; and, as far as lies in us, we consecrate them to him. We bind ourselves by the spirit and language of a holy solemnity, never to yield up to sin, to the world, and to hell, what we have thus given to the Lord; but to train them vigilantly for his heavenly service. We declare our fervent hope, warranted by his promises, that the Holy Spirit, “in the day of *his* power,” will cleanse them by the applied virtue of a Saviour’s expiating blood, and work within them a death unto sin, a new birth unto righteousness. And when their mental development permits, we have always a power of appeal to the circumstances of this affecting solemnity, by which we may throw additional weight into our instruction of them. All this we do, remembering that the rest belongs to God. We recognize a wide difference between the Commonwealth of ancient Israel, and the invisible kingdom of God. A Hebrew parent might,

by circumcision, secure to his offspring admission into the former ; but he who " baptizes with the Holy Spirit " can alone confer, on ours, admission into the latter.

Yet while the Commonwealth of ancient Israel was but, as it were, an anticipated province of the kingdom of God, confined principally to one nation, and fenced round with forms of a local and a national character, we acknowledge that it contained the unexpanded germ of that universal economy by which it has been superseded ; and the rite of circumcision *then* occupied a position corresponding with that of baptism *now*. But let us mark an inference that may be drawn from this fact, combined with the inspired statement that circumcision was " a sign and a seal of the righteousness of faith." (Rom. iv. 11.) To infants, incapable of faith, and consequently of a righteousness by faith imputed, was the rite of circumcision administered by divine authority. The scriptural administration of the rite was unaccompanied by that grace in the infant recipient, which yet the rite was intended to represent. Hence the scriptural administration of baptism to an infant will not necessarily involve the coexistence of that spiritual regeneration, of which baptism is an outward sign.

The Apostle Peter addresses the followers of Christ as " born again of *incorruptible seed, the word of God*" —and the baptism that saves is described by him as " not the putting away of bodily defilement, but *the answer of a good conscience toward God.*" In similar terms we are assured by the Apostle James of the instrumentality of the Divine word in spiritual regeneration—" of his own will begat he us *with the word of truth.*" Nor can any one suppose that the instrumentality intended in these passages may be supplied

at infant-baptism in the language of the officiating minister, since whatever that language may be imagined to effect instrumentally, none can believe it capable of producing in unthinking infancy *the answer of a good conscience toward God*. Here, therefore, is spiritual regeneration declared connected with the instrumentality of a believed Gospel, and with the result of a satisfied conscience. Were I to employ a mode of reasoning whose fallacy, I hope, has been sufficiently shewn, I might now *extend the application of these passages beyond the case of adult responsibility, for which they were intended, to that of irresponsible infancy with which they are wholly unconnected*; and thus I might argue for the necessity of faith and a good conscience in all who are baptized, and the consequent inadmissibility of infants to the ordinance. It is important, however, to observe, that although we read in the New Testament of "the doctrine of *baptisms*," and of whole families baptized, including, according to all but unavoidable supposition, persons of mature and persons of tender age, yet *we read in the New Testament of but one form of spiritual regeneration effected in this world, and that one effected by the instrumentality of God's word believed*. This, I own, is to my apprehension decisive against the doctrine of baptismal regeneration.

By the advocates of that doctrine ought, I think, to be held, the absolutely universal and indispensable necessity of baptism for the future safety of those who die at an irresponsible age. This appears an inference fairly and inevitably following their opinion of the necessity of a spiritual regeneration in this world, in all such instances, and of the connection between that regeneration and baptism. But if baptism be indis-

pensable for all who die in infancy, what, (with awe and reverence we demand) what is the prospect of the many souls disembodied before the age of responsibility, within the circle of Heathenism? I am not arguing now on merely rational grounds, nor urging an objection similar in principle to that of the sceptic who demands, what is the prospect of heathen nations, if Christianity be true? Christianity herself replies that his question concerns not *her*; for she judges none but those who live responsible within the sphere of her light. (Rom. ii. 12—15.) I am arguing still on scriptural grounds. The already quoted affirmation of our Divine Redeemer leaves no room for one reasonable doubt respecting the future safety of those who die irresponsible. On the inspired record a distinction appears between the disciples of Jesus, and those who brought little children to his presence, that he might bless them; it being stated that the latter were repulsed on the occasion by the former. The obvious inference is that the children brought were the offspring of persons unbaptized, and were themselves unbaptized also. Yet Jesus “took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.” (Mark x. 16.) Surely they are blessed whom He pronounces blessed! Was the blessing limited to the children who in that hour smiled happily, while they heard it? “*Of such* (our Redeemer said) is the kingdom of God.” And therefore He, in that hour, stretched forth his hands over the infant population of our world, and assured every parental bosom that no wrath is reserved in his own for the irresponsible, whose natural being has begun in this world, but whose moral being shall begin in another.

DISCOURSE II.

JOHN iii. 5.

“Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

Having contemplated the doctrine of baptismal regeneration in the light of Scripture, and seen it uncountenanced by its declarations, contradicted by its tenor, it is lawful, and may be profitable for us, to contemplate it also in the light of common sense.

Can the spiritual regeneration of an infant be effected by any thing less than an *immediate* act of omnipotence? The forerunner of Christ was “filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother’s womb.” But then we also read that “there had not arisen a greater *prophet* than John the Baptist.” He was a subject of the *extraordinary* operation of the Holy Spirit; and from the recorded fact, that the divine influences imbibed by him descended on his earliest years, we never can justly infer, that infancy is capable of the *ordinary* influence of the Spirit, for which alone we look at present. The process of a spiritual regeneration has appeared to some possible, in any instance, only by the intervention of moral motives. I dare not venture the whole length of such an opinion. I feel

incompetent to discern any involved impossibility in the spiritual regeneration of a creature by an immediate act of the Creator. I can even conceive of Him who formed the mystery of the human soul, as touching with his own hand its disordered springs, and by the omnipotence of his will, without the intervention of means, at once renovating all its moral tendencies—for innate *tendencies* we assuredly have. But this is miracle. There is a just distinction between the ordinary, and the miraculous, operations of Deity, although the Agent of either be the same, and all power inferior to his own be alike incompetent to either. In the one case instrumentality is employed—in the other it is set aside. In the ordinary operations of Deity we have conviction of the existence and activity of some natural cause, (whether we can precisely assign it or otherwise) intervening between the Great Agent and his work, and possessing an intrinsic adaptation to the instrumental production of the effect. For all that we denominate natural causes, however high we may ascend in tracing them, are but instruments in the work of the Almighty, quiescent but for Him, and owing all their efficacy to the hand that wields them. When we have detected cause after cause, in any department of nature, we at length feel ourselves in the vicinity of a CAUSE unsearchable; and are compelled to stop in philosophy at that point where peasant piety begins, ascribing ultimately all things that are to the will of God.—On the other hand, no instrument is employed in the miraculous operations of Deity. If in this case any thing discernable intervene between the Divine Agent and his work, it is a somewhat manifestly unadapted to accomplish it, and selected for the purpose of impressing an irresistible conviction

of His immediate agency. Thus at the raising of Lazarus from the tomb, no instrument was employed, no natural cause was put in activity; the uttered mandate, by its evident inadequacy to awake the dead, conveyed even to bigoted hostility an unconquerable conviction, that His will alone, who uttered it, caused the resurrection that followed. As it is in the operations of Deity in the material world, so it is in the operations of Deity in the spiritual world. The *ordinary* operations of the Holy Spirit are characterized by the employment of an adapted instrumentality; while in the *extraordinary* operations of the Holy Spirit, either no apparent medium intervenes between the Agent and his work, or one is selected for its manifest inadequacy to accomplish his work, in order to force the thoughts of witnesses on the unavoidable belief of his immediate Agency. Thus have we seen that an adequate instrumentality is employed in His ordinary work of spiritual regeneration. Truth deeply concerning man, and calculated to influence him powerfully when believed, is "the sword of the Spirit," by which he carries the citadel of a sinful heart. But when his extraordinary influence of old came down on the disciples, the voice of prayer and the laying on of hands constituted not an employed instrumentality, but conveyed an overwhelming impression of the absence of any, and carried the mind at once to the immediate agency of Omnipotence, as the only origin of the powers displayed. When the Apostles reasoned with mankind from self-evident principles, and from the Scriptures of Truth, an instrumentality was employed, in a certain sense adapted to the result of conversion, which, by divine blessing, followed. But when they laid their hands on the disciples, and prayed, and the

latter immediately spoke in languages previously unknown, foretold futurity, received power to heal disease, to restore deformity, to undo the work of death, here was an evident absence of all adapted instrumentality, leaving room for no other supposition than that of a direct operation of Almighty power.

No effect in the natural world follows what we denominate a natural cause, without the operation of the Power of God*—no effect in the spiritual world follows the movement of appropriate instrumentality, without the operation of the Spirit of God. In either case an instrument is wielded—in either case the Agent is Divine. And when in the natural department, or in the spiritual, an effect is produced without the intervention of an adapted instrument, the one instance is numbered among the miracles of the Creator—the other instance is numbered among the extraordinary operations of the Holy Spirit. This distinction, founded on the presence or the absence of adapted instrumentality, is equally palpable and just. Let it be also borne in mind that nought but demonstrable infatuation looks at present for, any but the *ordinary* operations of the Holy Spirit. In the use of adapted and appointed means may any divine grace be consistently expected by us; and in no other way.

Now the question arises—if an infant be spiritually regenerated at the baptismal font, are we to class the presumed work of Divine power in this instance among the ordinary, or among the extraordinary operations, of the Holy Spirit? If the presumed work of Divine power be real, obviously it belongs to the latter class. Here is employed no instrumentality at all adapted to the believed result—water sprinkled, and supplications offered, by the officiating minister of religion, con-

*Hebrews i. 3.

fessedly do not constitute such an instrumentality. On the contrary the whole case would be precisely similar to that of Apostolic imposition of hands, and immediately subsequent exhibition of supernatural powers—were the fact of a spiritual regeneration in the baptized infant unambiguously evident. The outward rite, or medium apparently intervening between the Divine Agent and his presumed work, in this instance and in the former precisely alike, is one utterly and obviously destitute of adaptation to the believed result, and therefore calculated to impress an inevitable conviction of the immediate operation of Omnipotence, were that result really and undeniably exhibited. And truly, when we contemplate the department, and the nature, of divine operation supposed in this case, we may well number baptismal regeneration, if real, among the most overwhelming instances of miracle, over which the human mind has ever paused in solemn reflection. But they who look for no miraculous interpositions will hesitate to admit the fact assumed, without convincing evidence of its reality.

Where shall such evidence be found? Is the believed regeneration of baptized infancy developed, from the earliest period, in bright and blessed contrast with the reigning depravity of unbaptized? Do the moral tendencies evince the reality of the operation supposed to have passed upon them, even though they be encompassed with all the care of Christian instruction and parental vigilance? While young hearts in all other bosoms develop a disposition alien from godliness, oh! say whether in the bosoms of our baptized little ones another heart be found, instinctively responding at the first-heard announcement of divine will, and at once living in divine truth as in its congenial element? A reply to such questions would be superfluous.

Baptismal regeneration, then, were it real, would be not merely a miracle, but an invisible and a quiescent miracle, destitute alike of evidence and of fruit. And can we, dare we believe, that one of the mightiest efforts of Omnipotence has been invisibly passing on the soul of childhood from generation to generation, without ever producing one discoverable benefit?

Any strength of expression which I may employ will find no condemnation among those who feel the importance of the present subject, and have witnessed the pernicious tendency of the error opposed. If we preach baptismal regeneration to our flocks, and are believed, we persuade them that no spiritual regeneration is needful for them, who have already in infancy experienced it. We contribute our aid to the enemy of souls in lulling them into false and fatal security. We blunt the edge of the sword of the Spirit, and of the injured weapon fabricate a chain for their moral captivity. The Gospel in our hands is shorn of its mightiest and most searching appeals; and its consolation, inseparable from its more awful truths, is at the same time nullified. If we preach baptismal regeneration, and are not believed, we make our office lightly esteemed, and draw down a blasphemous disdain on religion itself, associated, as it is, with our office in the popular mind.

Let it not be believed that a criminality so deep, so wide, has been incurred by our Church Established. A few quotations from her formularies, candidly considered, will clear her from the imputation of it. I would here premise that a distinction exists between the approbation of her Articles of Religion, and the approbation of her devotional forms, given by the ministers of our Church. We subscribe her Articles

of Religion as *Doctrinal Statements*; we consent to her devotional forms as *exclusively and without alteration to be employed in our public worship*. We deem it not lawful to break the unity of the Church, because one or another *expression* in her Book of Common Prayer be different from that which our individual judgments might have selected; while its entire *tenor* embodies, as we believe, the spirit of Christianity. A servile worshipping of every term in our formularies, as though it were dictated by the spirit of infallibility, would have been abhorred by the sainted men who composed them, and is altogether disclaimed by us. With these remarks in mind we turn to our Articles of Religion, and find, on the subject of infant baptism, no further *doctrinal statement* than the following—“The baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ.” This is cautiously wise; and contains not a hint beyond the information supplied in Scripture. We turn to the Baptismal Formulary itself. Undoubtedly our use of this, and every other, is an implied approbation *of its tenor*: and if it can be shown to embody the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, we are not justified in retaining it. In the thanksgiving, *after baptism has been administered to the child*, we pray “that he being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, and being buried with Christ in his death, may crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin.” We then solemnly admonish the sponsors, to train the object of their avowed solicitude in the knowledge and practice of religion. Is all this consistent with a conviction that spiritual regeneration has already been effected in him? We moreover declare, on the same occasion, that

“Baptism doth represent unto us *our profession, which is to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and be made like unto Him, that as he died and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness, continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living.*” Is infancy capable of what is here said to be *represented by Baptism*? Can any previous expressions in the formulary be fairly interpreted as implying a *present* participation, by the infant, of what Baptism represents, while the latter expressions of the formulary affirm Baptism to be representative of things obviously impossible in infancy? Uncandid and incurable prejudice may fasten on the use of the term regeneration, as if it were the brand of fatal error on the very face of the formulary—but what meaning can be extracted from the term, if explained, as it ought to be, in accordance with the passages I have quoted, except that of an introduction into the membership of the Visible Church—a sense, indeed, not connected with the term in Scripture, but in which it has been metaphorically employed by many theologians. Mark, I do not argue that *the letter* of the formulary is perfect, but that the *spirit* of it is Christian. We may candidly acknowledge the former capable of amendment, while we feel our consciences unviolated by the latter.—We turn to our Catechism, where the following passage is found—“What is required of persons to be baptized? *Answer.* Repentance whereby they forsake sin, and faith whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament. *Question.* Why then are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them? *Answer.*

Because they promise them both by their sureties, which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform." Have we not here a virtual disclaimer of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration—a solemn declaration, on the part of our Church, that the change contemplated by her, at infant baptism, is *a prospective one*? By expressing her belief that infancy is incapable of repentance and faith, she has declared it incapable of the only spiritual regeneration that, without miracle, can be effected in the human soul.

Ere quitting the present subject I would briefly refer to a point which I have hitherto forborne to notice, as not essential to our discussion, although naturally suggested by it, and interesting in itself. The question may be preferred, "where, and how, shall moral renovation be wrought in those who die in infancy, since the inborn depravity of our nature has made such a renovation equally indispensable for the final blessedness of all?" To refer to the silence of Scripture on this point, would be a sufficient answer on our part. With the solution of the inquiry we can have no practical concern; and therefore it is omitted in a volume written not for the food of our curiosity, but "for our instruction in righteousness." Enough for us to know that dying infancy is blessed; what remains is hid in the presence, but safe in the hands, of God. That, however, a future moral change in those who die in infancy involves no impossibility, nor contradicts the analogy of faith, we may fairly attempt to shew. Let me not be understood as undertaking to explain how the moral change adverted to *shall be effected*, but as endeavouring to explain *how it is possible*. God "*purifies by faith*" the hearts of his

children in this world. Because we believe the love of our Redeemer toward us, and because we believe whatever testimony he has left us in his word, we love him, we cultivate obedience to his will, we are progressively sanctified. But faith, in its very nature, is an imperfect principle, permitting the coexistence of conflicting opposites in the soul. The power of faith, when strongest, is not the certainty of sight; and here "we walk by faith, not by sight." It is "when we see Him, we shall be like him." In the rays of his glory all sin shall for ever die. Certainty shall then produce in perfection all the effects imperfectly produced by faith—for certainty is to faith what perfection is to imperfection. The wicked shall arise, and behold his glory too, but with a blighting consciousness of his offered mercy rejected, of his denounced indignation incurred. The view of his glory shall, therefore, be to them the signal of consummated misery; "all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of him." But not with that blighting consciousness will the dead in infancy arise. No recollected contempt of mercy shall curse the resurrection-morn to *them*. No anticipation of incurred vengeance will mar the bright and full disclosure of human redemption, that shall then break at once upon them, in unshadowed certainty and in unimpeded influence. They too shall see him, without one intervening cloud; and they shall be like him.

The history of baptismal regeneration is a lesson of caution in the study of Theology. There is hardly an error that may not, like it, be garnished round with passages of Revelation, forced from their intended reference, or stretched beyond it. We must interpret Revelation fairly, or suffer loss by our temerity in trifling with its contents. As in every volume, written

not in vainly-attempted metaphysical accuracy, but for the benefit, and therefore in the language of mankind at large, the meaning of particular passages in the Sacred Volume is limited by the tenor of the context and of the whole.

The error we have been contemplating is one of ancient origin ; and high prescriptive right is pleaded in its favor. But an appeal to *uninspired authority*, however grey with the venerable dignity supposed to be conferred by time, is utterly out of place, where the recognized all-sufficiency of an *inspired authority* exists. It is a fallacy even to imagine that the uninspired writings of Christians, who lived in the earlier period of the Church, are to be relied on as *historical evidence*, indicating with certainty what doctrines were delivered by the Apostles. *Between historical record of FACTS, and historical record of DOCTRINES, there is a great and glaring difference.* The transforming hand of prejudice may undoubtedly be exercised in representing either ; but *facts*, palpable and stubborn as they are, although they may be coloured, cannot be altogether molten down and moulded again, at the will of a historical writer who is to obtain credit with mankind ; while *doctrines*, on the contrary, are of so ethereal and plastic temperament, as to admit of a gentle and hardly perceptible transformation in the hands of a historical writer, who, perhaps, by misrepresenting them, enhances the popularity of his work with a numerous and influential party. Nor is it necessary to suppose that such a misrepresentation of doctrine has always been intentional. We have infallible authority for stating that error existed within the limits of the visible Church, in the earliest period of her existence—it

could breathe in the very air that was still breathed by the Apostles. When *their* removal opened room for theological discussion, which their presence had hindered, or restrained, all parties in every new controversy, would appeal sincerely to the general recollection of Apostolic preaching, every party wishing it, and therefore naturally believing it, on their own side. Hence, in the writings of all, an unintentional misrepresentation of the Apostolic doctrines might arise. As embodying historical memorials of *facts*, we attribute no inconsiderable value to the Christian Literature of the first three centuries. But as historical evidence of *doctrines*, we decline their authority. An instance occurring in our own day, furnishes a remarkable illustration of the present point. In a late division of a religious community, either party appealed to the authority of the Founder, whose oral preaching is yet deposited in living recollection. It is plain that we would not seek, from either party, traditional evidence decisive of the question, what were the opinions of the Founder, in reference to the point controverted among them? Reasonable persons, desirous of such information, would simply search for it in his own genuine writings, which also remain. Or, to employ a still more remarkable illustration—let us suppose that by a mysterious permission of divine Providence the Volume of Inspiration were lost to the world, while the whole of our Theological literature beside continued to exist. Would the writings of our Theologians furnish a satisfactory historical record of the doctrines of lost Revelation? Who does not know that all appeal to the Scriptures in vindication of their various and conflicting systems of religion, and that

consequently the doctrines contained in Scripture *must* be misrepresented among them, to a wide extent, although unintentionally? Moreover, the wisest and purest of our theological writers fall short of the excellence of inspiration, and must be admitted incompetent to embalm on their pages the entire and uninjured substance of Truth Revealed. But if, on the loss of Revelation, *another volume*, descriptive of the former, were conveyed to us *from Heaven*—like the second roll dictated by Jeremiah, when one had been destroyed by the profane King of Judah—who does not see that in the latter volume, and not in our theological literature, we should have a satisfactory tribunal of appeal respecting the contents of the former? It is thus that, wishing to ascertain what doctrines were personally promulgated by the Apostles, we find unquestionable record of those doctrines only in the New Testament. If we add to this the solemn statement of an Apostle, contained in the latter, that a mystery of iniquity, at work in the Christian community even when he wrote, was destined to a progressive and awfully extensive developement in succeeding times, we shall fully know what value ought to be attributed to the uninspired writings of the first three centuries of Christianity, considered under the aspect of doctrinal authorities.

An opinion entertained by some pious persons, of an *occasional regeneration* of infants in baptism, has not been noticed, nor shall be argumentatively, in the present discussion. With all respect and love for many who entertain it, I am compelled to regard it as encumbered with the principal difficulties, and wanting the bold consistency, of the opinion I have

endeavoured to refute—into which, indeed, it appears likely to slide by a very natural transition, or else to vanish altogether ; being, like the fabled bridge of Mohammed, an untenable position, in vain seeming to unite irreconcilable opposites.

FINIS.

R. DECK, PRINTER, IPSWICH.

A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH, STAFFORD,

AT THE

PRIMARY VISITATION

OF THE

LORD BISHOP OF LICHFIELD AND COVENTRY,

SEPTEMBER II, MDCCCXXXVI.

BY THE

REV. THOMAS BUTT, M.A.

RECTOR OF KYNNERSLEY, BENEFICED CURATE OF TRENTHAM,
AND DOMESTIC CHAPLAIN TO THE MOST NOBLE THE LATE AND PRESENT
DUKE OF SUTHERLAND.

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TO
THE RIGHT REV. THE
LORD BISHOP OF LICHFIELD AND COVENTRY,
AND TO THE
CLERGY OF HIS DIOCESE,
WHO ASSEMBLE AT STAFFORD,
THIS DISCOURSE,
IN DEEP SENSE
OF THE KINDNESS WITH WHICH IT WAS RECEIVED,
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY
AND AFFECTIONATELY PRESENTED.

A

S E R M O N,

&c.

2 Tim. iv. 1, 2.

“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.”

WHEN a Minister of the Gospel is called forth from his parochial offices, and required to declare the word of God before his ecclesiastical superiors, and before a numerous body of his clerical equals, it behoves him to consider carefully the position in which he stands. Thus only will he fulfil the awful duty to the satisfaction of his own conscience and to the spiritual benefit of those whom he addresses. We are

not preaching to a well known congregation, with whose excellencies and failings we have been long conversant, and therefore by the exercise of a sound judgment can urge what is fittest for their edification: neither are we required to instruct our hearers in truths with which they were previously unacquainted; to display profound learning and accurate research, or to broach novel theories of religion, and doubtful interpretations of Scripture: least of all is it expected that we should seize an opportunity, when no one can gainsay what we advance, to promulgate opinions honestly adopted by ourselves, but oppugned by equally honest and equally pious members of our own body. But each of us in turn exercises the common gift, which, it may be hoped, is *in us by the putting on of hands*. *We may all prophesy one by one, that all may successively learn, and all may be comforted.*

A clear distinction exists between the office of the appointed preacher and of those who are in authority. The selection of them to fill stations of dignity, and to exercise important jurisdiction, entitles, nay, requires them to

adopt a higher tone in addressing us, who are submitted to their government. He who is invested with power to send labourers into Christ's vineyard, and whose duty it is to inquire into the manner of fulfilling their arduous function, should himself *spe  k with all authority* ; he should *exhort*, and, if need be, *rebuke*, so that *no man* may *despise* him.

Confining myself then to what I consider the undoubted field of the private Minister of the Gospel, and anxious only so to *preach the word* on this important occasion, that He *who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom*, may accept the singleness of intention, and pardon the feebleness of the execution, I naturally turn to those perfect manuals of clerical duty, St. Paul's Epistles to the first Bishops of Ephesus and Crete. There I am sure to find the truth suggested in such a form as is most necessary for me to urge, and for all my clerical brethren, whether advanced in worldly station or not, to hear.

In perusing the text, the consideration was strongly impressed on my mind, that we, who are perpetually addressing others, are rarely

addressed ourselves ; that the very frequency of our composing and delivering sermons ; sermons moreover which generally escape the severe ordeal of competent criticism, exposes us to the danger of becoming mannerists, of adopting too narrow and unvaried trains of thought, of urging some necessary topics so unceasingly, as to throw into obscurity other subjects, which form essential parts of the grand whole of Christianity, and of which the varied contents of the Bible furnish both an authoritative pattern and an inexhaustible store-house. It cannot therefore be ill-timed, if we sometimes employ these interesting and valuable opportunities in bringing our practice as preachers to the touchstone ; in comparing our method of handling the word of God with the rule here set before us. No appeal lies against these injunctions of St. Paul ; they imply that the great Shepherd of souls demands our conformity to them : we must all before the judgment seat of Christ abide the solemn inquiry, *Have ye preached the word ? Have ye been instant in season, out of season ? Have ye reproved, rebuked, exhorted, with all*

long-suffering and doctrine ? That we may be able joyfully to answer these searching questions, we should habitually inquire both into the Matter and the Manner of our preaching ; we should daily strive to realise to our imaginations, that awful tribunal, before which Timothy, and every successor of Timothy to the end of time, is to render his account, and eternally to abide the consequences.

Beseeching, then, that Holy Spirit, who unerringly guided the pen of St. Paul, so to direct my thoughts, and to modify my words, that they may enter with convincing power into the hearts of all *who have ears to hear*, I proceed, First, to the Matter, which St. Paul declares must be predominant in a Christian discourse. An emphatic, and comprehensive expression conveys the whole grand idea, *Preach the Word*. It may be thought on an hasty perusal, that a very general term is used to describe the subject matter of our preaching, and that we are left at liberty to exercise our own judgment without, or at least with slight, limitation. But the formal charge, with which obedience is bound upon our consciences, precludes any such

lax notion. *The Word* which we are to *proclaim*, as it were, *on the house tops*, under this solemn adjuration, *is not hidden from us, neither is it far off*; it cannot be the rhetorical offspring of a lively fancy, nor even the moral speculations of a deep thinking mind—sad indeed would be our lot, if an essential clerical duty could be adequately performed only by the orator or the philosopher—it must be an attainment within the grasp of *ten thousand times ten thousand* labourers, who from the days of the Seventy have been sent to declare the approach of *the kingdom of God* unto *every city and place, whither* the Saviour himself would come. The particle, *therefore*, closely connects this chapter with the preceding; preponderating evidence, indeed, leads us to reject that word from the text; but the argument so strictly coheres, and the phrases used so completely harmonize, that the omission of it does not affect the conclusion at which we arrive. What *is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*, must be the instrument placed in his hands, who is to *reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doc-*

trine. This obvious deduction probably introduced the word *therefore*, as an explanatory gloss. We refer then for elucidation to what goes before, without hesitating. And there we find that the Holy Scriptures are *the Word* of which we are the appointed and responsible heralds to a bewildered world; those Holy Scriptures, of which the magnificent whole, commencing with the period when the creative energy was first manifested, and terminating with the promise of the mission of *Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord*, is *given by inspiration of God*. Perfecting this holy book, and unfolding its full import, are *the things which Timothy had learned and had been assured of*, by the oral teaching of the Apostle himself. These later traditions are of equal dignity and have received equal sanction with the Jewish Scriptures; for *Paul received them not of man, neither was he taught them, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ*. Timothy received them from his lips, and the Providence of the great Guardian of the Church, has preserved in writing from corruption and mutilation so much of his tes-

timony, and of the testimony of those, *who from the beginning were eye witnesses, and ministers of the word*, as it is necessary for us to possess. The Old Testament, therefore, and the New Testament combined, *the Holy Scriptures* of the past or Jewish age, and *the things assured*, to us by Apostles and Evangelists *in these last days*, together constitute *the Word* which we are *charged to preach*. We have the declaration of St. Paul, that an intimate acquaintance with them will *make us wise unto our own salvation*; that it will *perfect* our talent for winning souls to the faith of Christ; that it will supply us with *doctrine*, fitted *for reproof, for correction* or rebuke, *for instruction* and exhortation, and thus will *thoroughly furnish us* unto the great and *good work*, to which we have by the most solemn form *addicted* ourselves. To neglect it will intolerably aggravate our condemnation; to execute it faithfully will exalt us *as stars* in the spiritual *firmament, for ever and ever*.

It is not without weighty reason that *the Holy Scriptures* are called *the Word*. If *given by inspiration of God*, they must in effect be

the Word of God. In them the Almighty *speaks* to his sinful creatures through the medium of *men of like passions* with themselves. We gather then that *the dispensation of the grace of God* is entrusted to us; that we are to proclaim, not our own imaginations, but, a message, which we must neither curtail nor enlarge. A more powerful argument cannot be conceived, to prove the necessity of a close acquaintance with the Scriptures, of never ceasing our endeavours to understand and digest them, so that we may not err in delivering our high ambassage.

The name which St. Paul here gives to the Scriptures is adopted by St. John to denote the Saviour himself: and we may reverently presume that the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, guided both Apostles in a choice so remarkably co-incident. He *who spake to the fathers in the law and the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son*; to Him the whole volume of the Old Testament bears record more or less direct; his Almighty work of Redemption is exclusively the subject of the New Testament. It follows then that *to preach the*

Word is exactly the same thing as to *preach Jesus Christ*.

If it were needful to particularise the evidence of a truth so obvious, numerous passages in the Acts and the Epistles might be adduced in which to *preach the Word of God* and to *preach Jesus Christ* in some of his great offices are used indifferently, as convertible expressions. With admirable skill the Apostle introduces one of these great offices, by means of the solemn adjuration in my text. It is his manner to mould apparently incidental expressions, and even his numerous and complicated digressions, so as to make them subsidiary to his main argument. Here he insinuates that to proclaim *the Lord Jesus Christ as judge of the quick and the dead*, is one main branch of that *Word* which we are incessantly to *preach*. His own practice was conformable to it. To the Corinthians he declares all *preaching vain*, which does not involve the Resurrection of Christ, and in virtue of that Resurrection, our rising again also; he would not keep back the *Resurrection* and the *Judgment to come*, although the philosophers of Athens *mocked*

when they heard of them, and although Felix, whose fiat would deliver him to instant death, trembled as he reasoned of them.

We cannot err ~~then~~ in estimating what is essential to constitute a fulfilment of St. Paul's solemn charge. The Saviour is to be the *Alpha and Omega* of our discourses; we are to trace his divine lineaments obscurely portrayed under the old covenant, and manifested with unclouded glory in the Gospel; we are to convince our flocks of their forlorn and lost estate without him, to depict his perfect adaptation to all their needs; to magnify the love of the Father, whose wisdom devised the plan of redemption, and the love of the Son who willingly executed it, and thus to strive to excite correspondent feelings of gratitude and love, which shall be the spring of a cheerful and unreserved obedience; to bring religion home to their bosoms, as the personal business of every individual, with which *a stranger cannot intermeddle*. This is to scatter the good seed, which the fostering care of the Spirit will quicken into a living plant.

It is indeed expedient that we should also

cultivate other talents confided to us, that we should explore the arts of persuasion, that we should labour to attain that liveliness and warmth of language, by which mankind are usually incited to action ; it is a satisfactory evidence of our sincerity and zeal, and we may hope that, in the usual order of God's working, success will follow it. Still no step in the conversion of a soul is the achievement of man—it is God's blessing on man's work. If then our efforts are independent of *the Word*, if we in any way *preach ourselves* and not *Christ Jesus the Lord*, the eloquence of men and of angels becomes unmeaning and useless ; and the most powerful excitement is but the lighting of unhallowed fire. Secular topics may greatly move the hearers ; may open wide their hands in benevolent liberality, may steel their hearts for stubborn endurance or courageous opposition ; but to exalt such feelings and the actions which flow from them into *good works* in the proper Christian sense, not only must the object be such as the Gospel sanctions, but the arguments adduced, the motives urged must be based on Scripture,

and be strictly agreeable to the revealed will of God. *He who strives, is not crowned, except he strive lawfully. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.*

We go on to inquire, Secondly, into the Manner in which this great duty of preaching is to be executed. The Apostle's directions are equally comprehensive on this head also. We must apply *the word* to the Understanding, the Conscience and the Affections of our hearers, and we must gird ourselves to the task with uncompromising resolution and unwearied patience. We are to *preach with all doctrine*—ourselves thoroughly *instructed scribes, unto the kingdom of heaven*, we are to be qualified to *bring forth out of our treasure things new and old*, for the edification of the Church. *To convince, to rebuke, and to comfort*, are three grand divisions of our duty as Evangelists, which appear to leave nothing unprovided for.

Do we meet with infidels? Are any of our

people in danger of being seduced into unbelief or heresy? Is Scripture misrepresented and traduced? Are all the attributes of the Almighty Father not duly and equally honoured? Or is the supreme divinity of the Saviour denied? Or the ceaseless agency of the third Person in the ever blessed Trinity in building up the Church slighted? The Christian Minister is *charged* to be ever ready at his post of alarm; he must *reprove*, and he must *reprove with all doctrine*.

A firm and persevering, but dispassionate maintenance of the doctrines and discipline of our Church, as they are delivered in her Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies may be identified, we feel confident, with *preaching the word* of God in the way of argument. And since it has been abundantly shown that her revenues, taken as a whole, are far from adequate to the competent support of a clergy, fitted for the spiritual guidance of this great and civilized empire, a strenuous opposition to all plans, however specious, of alienating them, founded on this fact, and on the scriptural character of our Church, is a legitimate employment of the

reasonings of the preacher. The accompanying danger to the principles on which the right of property rests, may be safely left to the statesman and the politician.

Further, if we Protestants read the Bible aright, we have, under Providence, been liberated from the great Apostasy, from that mystic Babylon, of whose *plagues* all those shall *receive*, who do not *come out of her*, through the scriptural knowledge, the unanswerable reasonings, the zealous self-devotion of the Fathers of our Church. They sealed their faith with their blood, and we worthily imitate their example, when in times like the present we furbish up the long unused armour of God; when we instruct our congregations in the essential differences, which preclude all union with Romanists, save that of charity; and thus enable them *to give an answer to every man that asketh them a reason* of the faith which they profess.

Yet controversial arguments form but a small and occasional part of the preacher's office, at most seasons and in most places; while he perpetually finds occasion *to rebuke and to ex-*

hort. Licentious livers, tenacious of the Christian's name, and pretenders to his privileges and blessings, abound in every parish. From these the veil, which with busy self-deception they weave over a threatening futurity, is to be torn away; the artillery of God's wrath must be directed against their *strong holds*. Some are so wretchedly ignorant as to erect an hope of final salvation on the sacred words by which they were dedicated to the service of Christ. These must be *corrected*, by showing that *he is not a Christian, which is one outwardly; neither is that baptism, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Christian, which is one inwardly, and baptism is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter.* If any hearer of our public discourses, lives and dies under the misapprehension, that Baptismal Regeneration, or partaking in that other rite which the Lord himself appointed, and which, therefore, we rightly unite with it by a common title, as exalted above all other ceremonies—if, I repeat, one of our stated hearers is suffered to appear before *the Judge of quick and dead*, possessed with the false

belief, that any outward act can change and save his soul, the fault is not in the Liturgy, but in our remissness to guard it from misinterpretation ; and, I fear, his blood will be required of us. The Prayer Book, as well as the Bible, may be *wrested by unlearned and perverse interpreters to their own destruction ;* but we must *approve ourselves to be clear in this matter ;* we must be careful not to *partake of other men's sins.*

But other *mouths must be stopped* also ; those who mistake liveliness of feeling, and spiritual joy, and confident hope, for the undoubted evidence of a converted state. All these may be the result of peculiar circumstances, or the natural tendency of particular temperaments ; at most, they are privileges and supports, sometimes vouchsafed, sometimes withheld, as the great Distributer of grace judges to be fittest for his people. Much scriptural knowledge, and much of the genuine Christian character is often intermixed with this error. Still it is an error, which leavens and deteriorates the whole mass ; it relaxes watchfulness, and encourages indolence ; it

puffs up with haughty notions, hardly reconcilable with the deep humility essential to those who *have the mind of Christ*. Plain doctrine, then, directly leading us to a test and criterion which cannot be mistaken, must be urged in refutation of this dangerous confidence. *By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. By works faith is shewn ; by works a man is justified.* All other gifts of the Spirit *without charity profit nothing*. The inquisition of the last day will be directed to deeds of Christian love—to the outward expression, as the only accepted evidence of the inward possession of it. I have noticed two common cases, in which like Isaiah and Ezekiel we must *set our faces like flint to rebuke with all doctrine*: they are but specimens of the numerous phases of sin and error, and of the consequent necessity of activity in detecting and exposing them.

But our labours are not confined to the ungrateful office of confounding the gainsayer and rebuking the vicious ; a delightful duty yet remains. As every faithful Minister may expect that God will give him some *increase*,

some crown of rejoicing at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, he will, in preaching the word, be called to *exhort* or comfort also. Even the irreligious are often desirous of our attendance, when experiencing the utter failure of mere worldly consolations ; when they find that *riches*, and powerful friends, and commanding abilities *profit not in the day of wrath* ; for who can bear *the arrows of the Almighty*, if aimed in vengeance ? But in happier cases, though *the spirit be willing*, and serve the Lord in sincerity, *the flesh is weak*. In the pulpit and *from house to house*, we shall often be called to *support the weak and comfort the feeble minded*. Younger Ministers, who desire to fulfil this duty, and yet fear that from inexperience they may fail in the performance, should encourage themselves not to shrink from it by the recollection, that it is not necessary to be prepared beforehand with profound or novel topics. Man is so constituted that he derives comfort and resolution, when he hears his fellow man re-echo truths and quote divine promises, with which he is familiar ; which he himself is in the habit of perpetually address-

ing to his own fears and sorrows. He *thanks God and takes courage*. The sympathies of his nature are awakened ; and one cheering declaration of his Saviour, uttered with affectionate feeling by the Minister whom he loves and reveres, supports his fainting spirit more than the volumes of holy and eloquent writers, whose tongues are silent.

But I have unadvisedly attempted a subject, too vast for the space I ought to occupy, and must entreat your indulgence, while I still trespass on your valuable time. The preacher after Paul's heart, I have shown, aims at convincing the understanding, arousing the torpid conscience, and speaking peace to the wounded spirit. *Of God*, we have *sufficiency* for these *greater works* than miracles tested by the senses. But then we must apply ourselves *in season, out of season*. *We* have a large and convenient season, a copious and abundant opportunity conceded to us, by the acknowledgment of friend and foe alike, on every returning seventh day ; when we may *preach the kingdom of God, and teach those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confi-*

dence, no man forbidding us. These are indeed golden occasions, talents of no ordinary privilege, requiring no ordinary exertion to cultivate them aright. We are unlimited in the choice of topics ; we are heard with silence and attention and respect ; we preach not before captious or calumnious auditors, but before a congregation baptized by ourselves into the faith of the same Lord, professing every sabbath day the same Creed, believing that the way of salvation is taught by the Church, of which we are ministers by deliberate and conscientious choice. We should rejoice with trembling, while we survey the abundant field, thus expanding itself to our care. May the great Lord of the Harvest, enable each of us to *divide aright the word of truth !* may He find us *at his appearing and his kingdom, giving* to each member of *his household his portion of meat in due season !*

We may hope to achieve this with better success, if we are on the watch for improving the opportunities ministered by passing events. The listlessness, which sometimes invades our hearers, is best opposed, if we provide innocent

food for that love of variety and novelty, which is a component part of our nature. The return of the festivals of the Church, her occasional offices, especially Baptism and Confirmation, the change of seasons, the blessing of plentiful harvests or commercial prosperity, the wholesome chastisement of times of scarcity or sickness, political events which sensibly affect the condition of men individually, awful visitations of Providence in our immediate neighbourhood, should not glide by unnoticed in the pulpit. Frequent and well chosen applications to the charitable liberality of our people, on behalf either of temporal or spiritual destitution, are not merely expedient, but necessary, in order so to train them, that they may be *ready to distribute, willing to communicate*. These topics may be handled in such a manner as to excite and gratify curiosity; and the wisdom of the serpent is allowably manifested, by reckoning them among the occasions of speaking *the good word in due season*.

But we cannot, after all, fully do this by public preaching. This assertion involves a truth, on which we perpetually act in the daily

intercourse of life. On common topics we do not address without modification those with whom we are conversant. We must then be discreetly busied from house to house. And here also our station as Ministers of an Established Church, long identified with the habits and partialities of the people, gives us an invaluable vantage ground. It is in general our own fault if we have not an almost unrestricted entrance yielded to us into every dwelling of our allotted circuit; we may alike lift the cottage latch and enter the lordly hall; and we must not neglect the favourable season when the heart is dilated by worldly blessings, or softened by sorrow, or humbled by sickness and adversity.

Particular appeals may be made, in public or in private, as a well-exercised judgment will suggest, to the old and the young, to male and female, to the married and the single, to parents and children, to masters and servants, relatively to the duties of the state in which God's providence has placed each of them. The regulation of the School, which no well-ordered parish is without; the Cottage Week

Day Lecture, an admirable expedient for access to every corner of an extensive parish, partake of the character both of public and private ministrations, and enable us to *supply that lack of service*, which results from the limited physical strength of many of us. We can in general pay but a perfunctory attention to Sunday Schools, we can but rarely visit the labourer or the artisan, at leisure on the happy day of his rest, from the necessity of husbanding our powers for the performance of the appointed public offices. If the catechetical instruction of the young, and easy expositions of large portions of Scripture could by skilful management be substituted in place of a second Sermon, the advantages of public and private teaching would in some measure be united, the plain intentions of our Church would be better fulfilled, and the building up into the perfect Christian would be afterwards attempted on a broader foundation.

But we must *preach the Word* even out of season. And who shall dare to question the heavenly wisdom with which St. Paul urges on us this startling demand? In one view the Gospel is always preached out of season to

wicked men. They abhor its awful verities, and hate to be reminded of them. It is never *a convenient season* when we urge home on the conscience, that injustice, intemperance, or any other scandalous sins *go before* to certain condemnation at the *judgment*. The indolent, unprofitable Christian, who is ever deferring to an uncertain morrow the work of repentance, and the work of obedience, which he was sent into the world to fulfil, thinks it highly unseasonable, when he is summoned to *awake as from the dead*, when he is reminded that change of heart, and will, and conduct, is not in his own power, whenever he pleases to adopt it; and that each additional day on which the man continues to grieve the Holy Spirit, fixes an additional rivet to the chain of corrupt habit with which he is miserably bound. But, I think the Apostle speaks of the preaching which Timothy himself might deem *out of season*; he is not supposing that his disciple will pry into the inscrutable folds of another's heart, to ascertain whether he is ready to hear or no. Our own lukewarmness, our own slug-

gishness, our own timidity, are ever fabricating imaginary times of unseasonableness ; we too have our fields, our wives, our oxen—we have the world in some shape or other perpetually soliciting us; we leave our few sheep in the wilderness, and run into the stir and excitement of the camp ; or we like not the unre-laxing effort required in order to bear the heat and burden through the twelve hours of a toilsome day, and we would curtail, or at least put off our labours, although the souls for which we are accountable, are daily passing into eternity, till time and opportunity are fled for ever, under the pretence that repose is necessary for the weakness of the flesh ; or we picture to our cowardly fancies the loss of friends, the blight of our worldly prospects, the hatred and hostility we shall excite ; and hence conclude that it is highly unseasonable to confute or reprove. We are tempted to forget the promises that if we *acknowledge the Lord in all our ways, he shall direct our paths ;* that he *will never leave nor forsake us ;* that he only is to be *feared who is able to destroy both*

soul and body in hell ; that an inspired Apostle has commanded us to *preach the word*, not merely *in season*, but *out of season*.

There is also another plea of unseasonableness, less grossly and palpably wrong, though its influence on a minister's usefulness is equally baneful. Inferiority in rank, in age, in natural or acquired ability, are deemed to be valid excuses for not proclaiming *the whole counsel of God* with plainness and boldness. These are reasons for deep humility, for close dependence on the Lord of all power, for carefully guarding against expressions, which may justly be stigmatized as arrogant and presumptuous, for redoubled pains in improving the talent actually confided to us—but here their operation must be limited. The work is not ours, it is our Divine Master's. The mightiest among us are but the *hammer*, with which he pleases to *break the rock in pieces* ; *neither he that planteth, nor he that watereth is any thing, but God that giveth the increase* : and he may choose to *confound* or convert by *weak and despised* instruments, rather than to grant success to him, who stands in the pride of his heart, and speaks as if his

stroke drew the waters of life out of the living rock. It were treason against the undivided rule of Heaven, to lose sight but for a moment, of the exclusive energy of the Holy Spirit in the salvation of man.

But we may be suspected of urging forward with a rash and imprudent zeal. Taking the Apostle for our guide, however, this zeal will be tempered with discretion. Though we are to be *instant in season, out of season, reproving, rebuking, exhorting*, still it must be *with all long-suffering and doctrine*, or, as it may be expressed, *with all patient teaching*. Jewish writers are in the habit of employing two substantives, where we use a substantive and an adjective. St. Paul intimates that we must expect opposition and discouragement; and warns us to arm ourselves with *the mind, which was also in Christ Jesus*, that we be not overwhelmed with the shock. *The disciple is not above his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household.* The admonition extends also to the temper and tone which we are to adopt in our preaching. Violent and

wrathful denunciations, rather terrify and alienate than convert; and if our sincere and zealous efforts be repaid with coldness or hostility, we should narrowly examine whether harsh language has not been adopted, before gentler methods had been repeatedly tried in vain. Men may be drawn by the cords of love, while they resent with passionate obstinacy, if we would compel them to come in and be saved.

When we pause to review the ground over which we have travelled, my thoughts are irresistibly drawn to our deceased Father in Christ, whose loss we still deplore with unaffected sorrow, and whose praise may now be heard *in the churches of God*, without a suspicion of interested motive. Never can we forget his urbanity, kindness, and condescension, those evidences of natural amenity of temper, of manners superinduced by intercourse from his earliest years with dignified and refined society, of a renewed heart, overflowing with love to God and man, blended in rare and happy union. It was his delight to treat those, over whom he

exercised jurisdiction, as his equal brethren in Christ Jesus, servants of one common Lord, engaged in one common spiritual warfare, fellow helpers of each other's usefulness. Humility of self estimation was joined in him with an ever active desire to *preach the Word*. The Apostle's charge seemed to be *graven with an iron pen* on his inmost soul. Beyond the limit which prudence marked out for the exercise of his physical powers, he indeed was *instant in season, out of season, to reprove, rebuke, and exhort*, and as I would especially note, *with all long suffering, and doctrine*. He felt that the numerous congregations, over whose pastors he presided, were one vast flock, committed by the Chief Shepherd to his superintending care, and was ever busied in executing the boundless labours which thus lay before him. Rightly judging that He, *who walketh in the midst* of the Churches, may have much people in a comparatively small assembly, and that great and mean are differently estimated in man's calculations, and in the arithmetic of Heaven, he was as ready to bear testimony to the truth,

before a scanty rural population as in crowded cities.

Surely he did not err in deeming that *necessity was laid upon him to preach the Gospel*. For though this *charge* of St. Paul, like all other parts of Holy Writ, is not of a limited, or private interpretation, and though the Apostle, in addressing Timothy, admonishes every Christian Minister until the consummation of all things,—yet what was addressed to a Bishop in his episcopal capacity, and was not of a local or temporary nature, peculiarly requires the reverent obedience of every man advanced to the like spiritual dignity. Why should it not be said, that a modification of Church Government, by which Bishops would constantly hear their Clergy, or be heard by them, would bring us a step nearer to the primitive pattern, and that the benefit would be obvious and great? Would, that instead of unions of Dioceses, every large town possessed within its circuit, or in its immediate neighbourhood, a revered Superintendent, vested with an authority, controlled by the well defined laws of this great and free country, whose mature judg-

ments might be aided by the opinions of his most esteemed subordinate Ministers. His decisions might be influenced by the sentiments of the intelligent and religious portion of the community, but should be liberated from the intolerable vexation of costly and ruinous Appeals. As things are now constituted, the great extent or enormous population of our Dioceses, the consequent routine of oppressive official duties, the necessity of long attendance in the great council of the nation, where Bishops are the only direct guardians of the interests of the Church and of religion, preclude that frequent intercourse between the Bishop and his Clergy and the people at large, which perfects the Apostolical fabric of Episcopal Government.

The efforts of our late most beloved ruler to overcome these difficulties, and to be ever conversant with all parts of his Diocese, were so remarkable, that some men, forgetful of the position in which Christ has placed these *burning and shining lights* for the benefit of his house, the Church, have said, that in preaching he exceeded the limit of episcopal

requirement; when in reality no human strength under our circumstances could attain it. His affectionate friends saw and lamented, that by incessant labour he was hurrying on the final period of his great usefulness on earth. But if he erred by disregard of bodily health, still he erred on the safe side; life may have been shortened, yet he *finished the course* marked out for him, he *fought a good fight*, he fell with his harness on. We must not attribute too much to the excellent of the earth, as if the great Head of the Church needed the arm of man: his mysterious wisdom will work by instruments and by ways of his own choosing: and as the trees of his planting are matured in virtue, he delights to remove them to the *side of the river of life* in the Paradise of God.

May his well known example stimulate all of us to *follow his faith*, to walk in his footsteps; for they lead assuredly to peace and joy. We can never rest our heads in peace, either on our nightly pillow, or in the unpillowed coffin, with the Apostle's awful adjuration vibrating in our ears, unless conscience respond to our daily

self-examination, that we are, according to the measure of the gift confided to us, striving to obey it.

In attempting to expand Paul's masterly sketch of the preacher's office, I may have enfeebled the vigour of it, I may have erred in some detail of my explication : but my comfort is that *I speak to wise men ; judge ye what I say*. Whatever defect there may be in the expositor, the charge itself stands unshaken in its own inspired perfection ; the adjuration presses on the conscience in its own dread reality. Bishop, Priests, and Deacons, *I charge you alike, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom ; preach the word ; be instant in season, out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.*

COLLECT.

O Almighty God, who by thy Son Jesus Christ, didst give to thy Apostles many excellent gifts, and commandedst them earnestly to

feed thy flock : Make, we beseech thee, all Bishops and Pastors diligently to preach thy Holy Word, and the people obediently to follow the same, that they may receive the crown of everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE END.

A
VISITATION SERMON.

**John Moore, High-street,
Birmingham.**

A
VISITATION SERMON,

PREACHED AT COLESHILL,

AUGUST 30, 1836,

BY

THE REV. ARCHER CLIVE, A.M.

RECTOR OF SOLIHULL,

**AND PUBLISHED BY DESIRE OF
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MDCCCXXXVI.



SERMON.

1 Cor. xi. 18.

**"I HEAR THAT THERE BE DIVISIONS AMONG YOU, AND I
PARTLY BELIEVE IT."**

THE different views which professed christians have taken of their common faith, and the schisms and disputes which have divided the church in consequence of the obstinacy of one or both parties, have ever furnished a most fertile topic of railing against the religion of Jesus to its enemies, and a heartfelt subject of regret among its friends. The heathen of the apostolic age might find plausible reasons against the truth of the Gospel in those very divisions which Paul noticed and re-proved; the roman catholic of the 16th century chose the same ground to attack the doctrines of the reformation; and if the dissenter of the present day should discern a variety in doctrine among the ministers of the church, he might well say that the breach of christian unity which is urged against him, exists in the church as much as out of it. Now all these arguments

are forcible, not because christians have taken different views of the gospel, nor because all protestants have not gone equally far in condemning and seceding from the corruptions of Rome ; but because these differences of opinions have produced schisms and disputes ; because all parties have used unjustifiable means to extend their own doctrines, all have been persecutors when they have had the power, all have been captious and obstinate in raising and maintaining " objections for conscience sake." We must therefore distinguish between differences of opinion, and divisions. Many of the divisions that have rent the church, have arisen between men whose opinions coincided upon all the fundamental doctrines of our faith, and who were only at variance upon certain points of discipline or ceremonial observance ; but surely all such differences of opinion need not have created divisions. The former I conceive to be necessary consequences of the manner of teaching adopted in the scriptures, and of the diversity of human intellects and dispositions. The latter are only contingent, and arise from the vanity, the impatience of contradiction, the corrupt nature in short of man. Difference of opinion founded on different understanding of the same word of God, is, I doubt not, one of the means by which Infinite Wisdom has provided that we may be induced to search the scriptures,

to inquire, to study, to exert every faculty of our minds, in order to the true apprehending of matter so important, as that which teaches us the relation between the creature and the Creator. But divisions are no part of the Divine scheme, but the natural consequence permitted to follow upon and punish the pride or the perverseness of man. We have in scripture many directions, given generally by our Lord, and more particularly by his followers and Apostles, for the prevention of divisions, and they are always reprobated as positive evils and sinful.

Our Lord reminds us that, "one is our Master, even Christ, and that all his followers are brethren." St. Paul tells us expressly "not to receive one who is weak in the faith, to doubtful disputations," and bids us beware "how we judge another man's servant." Speaking of offences, of which none is more pregnant with evil consequences than an angry dispute between our Lord's followers, Jesus says, "Wo unto that man by whom they come," or who is the cause of them; and St. Paul, in this same epistle, commending the virtue of charity, in a strain which must certainly be understood to refer to what has gone before concerning disputes, says, "If I have not charity I am nothing." Paul therefore would prevent differences from degenerating into divisions, and Jesus, while foretelling that they would

arise, inculcates such a temper as would have prevented them. Now there are two methods by which men may be brought to unity, one by mutual concession,—the other by bringing into action a superior force and compelling the one party to give way to the other. It must be at once evident that this latter method can only produce an outward appearance of unity; men may be forced to comply, but they cannot be forced to think compliance right. The influence of fear may make them hypocrites, it cannot make their minds assent to a proposition which they believe to be false; and any union which is obtained by coercion, must be hollow and deceitful. The only method by which the unity of the faith in the bond of peace can be preserved, is by persuading those who are agreed in essential matters, to abstain from vexatiously pressing their own views upon subjects of less importance; by teaching them that whenever men are sufficiently interested to inquire for themselves, they must frequently arrive at different conclusions; but that where the subject matter of these conclusions is less than the fundamental doctrines of our faith, christians may worship in one church, and kneel at one altar, and be edified by one exhortation, without any abandonment of principle. My object in this discourse will be to show, that of these two methods of producing unity, the one

adopted by the inspired rulers of the church during that period of its history which is comprised in the New Testament, was mutual concession. I shall then compare their proceedings with the conduct of the rulers of our own church towards those, who agreeing with her in fundamental doctrines, have at various times raised objections to her ceremonies or to her discipline, and if the result of this inquiry should show that evil has ensued from a departure from apostolic precedent, I hope that the subject may be so blessed to us as to make us, who are presbyters of the church of this realm, feel the necessity of sinking any differences of opinion that may now exist among us, and of avoiding that greatest of evils, the spirit of party; and that we may learn to unite in a cordial co-operation to promote the great ends for which we are enrolled; even the spread of love and christian charity on earth, and the gathering in of souls unto our Master Christ, who may become dwellers in his kingdom in heaven.

My reverend brethren will well remember the first subject that caused a difference of opinion among the members of the christian church. It was no slight nor unimportant question whether the ceremonies of the Jewish law were to continue binding upon christians or not. Nor was the answer to that question for a moment doubt-

ful. If it had been decided in the affirmative, the very foundation of all christianity, justification through Christ, would have been taken away. "If ye be circumcised," that is if ye trust for acceptance, to this ancient rite, "Christ shall profit you nothing." The Apostles with whom rested the decision of that question, were surely fully sensible of its importance, and were so under the guidance of the spirit of truth, that they could not for a moment have doubted as to the answer they had to send ; and yet that answer is as considerate of the prejudices of those who still adhered to the faith and observance of their ancestors, as it could be without a compromise of principle. There is no prohibition to the Jew whose scruples still kept him obedient to the law of Moses, from practising its ordinances, but there is the assertion of the perfect liberty of the Gentile. Acting in conformity with this decree, the Jewish convert might have continued the religious observances in which he had been educated, he might have circumcised his children and have abstained from meats, and have kept the festivals of the church of his fathers. His neighbour, the Gentile convert of the same place and at the same time, might have acknowledged no distinction of meats, might never have visited the holy city, and might have viewed all the ceremonial observances of his neighbour with as much indifference

as we look upon the different habits of another people. And yet if both of them believed that Jesus was the Christ and the Son of God, looking to him as the author and finisher of their salvation ; if both continued steadfast in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers, the one might have been as worthy a member of the church as the other, and no man could have said that a breach of christian unity had arisen from their differences. Had these differences at any time degenerated into a dispute, and one of the inspired rulers of the church been appealed to, to decide between them, the answer would no doubt have been the same advice that was afterwards given to quiet the jars and bickerings in the church at Rome : " Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not ; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth ; for God has received him ;" and again, " One man esteemeth one day above another ; another man esteemeth every day alike ; let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind : he that regardeth the day regardeth it to the Lord, and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it." Rom. xiv. 5, 16 ; and again, " Let us not therefore judge one another any more, but let us judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way. I know and am persuaded by the Lord,

that there is nothing unclean in itself, but to him that believeth it unclean to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat how walkest thou not charitably; destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died." Rom. xiv. 13, 14, 15. How many of the differences of opinion, which in recent times have split the church into a thousand wrangling sects, are more important than this one, which the Apostles so wisely, so moderately, and so considerately decided? How many schisms might have been prevented if the same soothing remedy had been applied in time! How much christian blood might have been saved, how much charity and love would have been increased! How many events which the infidel points at with scorn, and which every follower of our Lord must remember with shame, would never have occurred!

Let us now apply these general observations to the history of the dissensions in our own church.

The opening of the 16th century beheld this whole kingdom outwardly united in one form of religious worship; no voice was raised against the doctrines or the observances of the church of Rome, and only a few minds dared to entertain a doubt of her perfection and infallibility. The seed sown by Wycliffe had not indeed altogether perished, but the crop which had grown from it was in great measure destroyed, having come up

before the advancing spring-time of the human mind was sufficiently established, to ripen it with the sunshine of public favour. Yet some of it no doubt remained, in secret and remote places. A few ears had escaped the frosts of persecution, and were ready to propagate their fruit at a more favourable season; but these were unknown and unobserved amid the general submission which was apparently yielded to the prevailing faith; and at the accession of Henry VIII. the wish for a reformation in religion scarcely exceeded a low murmur at some of the more obvious abuses, and a suppressed sneer at some of the most glaring superstitions. If then, the objections which were made by the advocates of a reformation, had been met in the spirit which Paul would have inculcated; if the hierarchy of that time, or the King, after that by the act of supremacy he had been made head of the church, had consented to a patient appeal to scripture, and to an examination of disputed doctrines in the spirit of mutual forbearance and patient inquiry; "if," to use the language of an historian of the last century,* "all penal statutes had been taken away, and the points in controversy between papists and protest-

* Neal, vol. 1, page 36.

ants had been left to a free and open debate, while the civil magistrate had stood by and only kept the peace, the reformation would certainly have taken place in due time, and proceeded in a much more unexceptionable manner than it did." But the Romish priesthood could not admit inquiry into their doctrines and ceremonies upon the principle of ascertaining whether they were founded upon sufficient authority, without tacitly abandoning their claim to infallibility, and the King wishing for no further change than that which substituted his own authority for that of the Pope, was as ready to condemn to the stake, the protestant who denied the doctrine of transubstantiation, as he was to send to the block the roman catholic who refused to acknowledge his supremacy. It might have been supposed that when in the following reign the reformed became the dominant religion of the state, forbearance and moderation would have been shown to their adversaries, by those who had so recently needed it for themselves; and that they would at least have admitted the possibility of improvement in the forms of prayer that had been recently published by their authority; but the very same act of parliament which confirmed the new liturgy in the reign of Edward VI. not only imposed penalties upon such of the clergy as de-

clined to use it, but even on any one who should write against it.* The principle of toleration, as laid down by St. Paul, was unknown; policy and worldly wisdom were indeed displayed in not making innovations rapidly and unnecessarily, and there was evidently a wish to make the new service comprehensive; but the prevailing notion in men's minds, both then and long afterwards, was, not that unity is to be obtained by mutual forbearance and concession to weak consciences, but that uniformity is to be enforced by law, and that no discretionary latitude can be allowed, to deviate from one prescribed mode of worship.

I need not dwell upon the sanguinary events of the reign of Mary; disgraceful alike to the church which sanctioned them, and to the age which submitted to them, they afford a horrible illustration of the practice of compulsory conformity, carried to its utmost extent: and they had the effect of inspiring the nation with a hatred of the roman catholic faith, which, after many generations, was not obliterated.

The opening of the following reign afforded an opportunity for establishing the national church upon the broadest, and therefore the

* Passed 15th of January, 1548—9.

firmest basis, which occurred only once afterwards in our history, and which at both times was unfortunately profitless. Had the spirit of Paul, or that of the first council at Jerusalem, ruled the breasts of the great scholars, who on those two occasions regulated the liturgy of our church, it is probable that the body of dissent which is now arrayed against her, would never have attained to its present strength and consistency. But while they were all aware of the dangers which might arise from popery, and endeavoured to guard against them by comprehending as many as possible of its advocates within the pale of the church, they seem to have been singularly blind to those which might arise from another quarter, from a schism among protestants. Thus the service, in some particulars, was framed with more indulgence to the peculiar opinions of the roman catholics, than it had been in the reign of Edward VI. The communion service in particular, being so altered as to enable believers in the doctrine of transubstantiation to join in it without scruple. The wisdom of these proceedings was apparent, in that for nine or ten years most of the roman catholic laity came regularly to the established worship; and it was only when they were forbidden by the head of their own church, and when in despair of regaining his power by gentle

means, he issued his bull of excommunication against the Queen, that they formally separated themselves from the church of their country.

But, in the mean time, the Bishops of that day had to encounter opposition from another quarter. A sect began to arise within the reformed church itself, which asserted that the principles of the reformation had not been carried to a sufficient extent, and demanded a further curtailment of ceremonies, and a nearer approximation to perfect simplicity of worship. Thus the Bishops were placed in the difficult position of keeping a just mean between the gorgeous pageantry of the roman catholic worship, and the homely simplicity of the school of Geneva. And perhaps upon the principle which was at that time generally admitted, that one line was to be drawn, and no deviation from it allowed ; the course which they followed was the best that could have been chosen. But the principle itself was erroneous as applied to the scruples of the puritans. A case had occurred to which the Apostle's advice was directly applicable, and had it been sought for and followed, the results would have been, in all probability, very different. The chief subjects of which the puritans complained, were, the vestments used by the ministers of the church, the sign of the cross in baptism, and the necessity of kneeling to receive the sacrament ; and the answer to their

complaints was, that these were matters indifferent in themselves, but conducive to decorum in public worship, and to godliness, and expressive of due reverence for sacred things. Still no advance was made to meet their scruples, either by an alteration of the rubric in accordance with their views, or by permitting individuals to deviate from it.

Now, if all these points had been so far conceded to them, as to leave each minister to decide upon the use or disuse of the surplice and sign of the cross, and each communicant at liberty to receive the sacrament in the posture his own conscience approved of, I think it probable that in a few years, when the acrimony arising from former opposition had subsided, one custom would have obtained throughout the land; and the alternative whether our ordinances remained as they are, or whether they had gradually changed into what the puritans desired, was surely of infinitely less importance than the alternative whether there should be a secession from the church, and a schism, or no. But if the consequence had been, that in some churches the new mode had obtained, and in others the old one had continued; I cannot see that this difference would have been greater than the one sanctioned by the Apostle, when he allowed the Jewish converts to retain, and permitted the Gentile con-

verts to dispense with the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law. Toleration was however then unknown, and though the form of a discussion was permitted on several occasions during the reigns of Elizabeth, and James, and Charles I. yet the claims and petitions of the dissentients were met by coercive enactments, and by the imposition of closer tests, and never by concession to weak consciences, or in the spirit of christian charity and love.

Then followed the natural consequences; all these points of difference, when they were enforced by pains and penalties, and resisted on the plea of conscience, rose into an importance which never ought to have belonged to them. The ceremonies which had been opposed by Sampson and Humphry, at Oxford, and Cartwright, at Cambridge,* in the commencement of Elizabeth, merely as inconvenient, were denounced somewhat later by non-conformists, as absolutely unlawful, and during the great rebellion, when those who had so long fruitlessly petitioned for toleration, became the ruling party in the state, the discipline and ceremonies which they had objected to, were denounced as prelacy and superstition, and were classed with heresy and profane-

* Short's History of the Church, page 417.

ness, and ordered to be extirpated.* And thus men, who under different treatment, might have been soon brought to acknowledge the absurdity of disputing about forms with persons with whom they were agreed in every essential point of doctrine; were, by vexatious persecutions brought to suffer fines and imprisonments, and would have no doubt been equally ready to wear the crown of martyrdom, sooner than be instructed by a minister in a surplice, or have their children baptized with the sign of the cross, or receive the tokens of Christ's body and blood upon their knees. That men, who had so long suffered from the intolerance of those above them, and who had shown such willingness to endure, for what they deemed righteousness sake, should afterwards, when the revolutions of the state had given them the power, be equally ready to inflict as they had been to bear; is a lamentable proof to us, that an age remarkable for depth of theological learning, and for zeal and earnestness in the cause of religion, was yet most deficient in that wisdom which is "from above, and which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated." We come now to the period of another great

* Solemn League and Covenant, ordered to be taken by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, 1644.

change. The nation, wearied with civil war, and disgusted with the fanaticism of the various sectarians who made their faith the stepping-stone to political power, sought for civil peace in the restoration of their ancient government, and for religious peace in the bosom of the national church. If, at that time, the councils of the nation had been swayed by moderation, a second opportunity presented itself of establishing the church upon a wide and secure foundation. All parties had learned moderation from bitter experience of the evils they had suffered by civil war. The presbyterians were ready to submit to our form of church government, with few modifications, and to adopt the liturgy of the church upon the same terms ; and with regard to the ceremonies which they had formerly declared unlawful, they only petitioned that they might not be imposed on such as scrupled them.* In answer, the Bishops agreed to a revision of the liturgy, and would from their language have been content to waive the imposition of the ceremonies in question. After hearing both parties, a declaration was published by the restored King, conceding some of the contested points, which proved so satisfactory, as to give rise to an address of

* Petition of Non-conformists to Charles II.

thanks from the leaders of the presbyterian body, and while some accepted preferment at once in the church, upon the faith of it, others only hesitated till it should have passed into a law, and professed a hearty desire for peace. But on a sudden this promising state of affairs was changed ; and the reconciliation which might then have been effected, and which would have prevented the formidable array of dissent that is now opposed to the church, was stopped, and probably for ever.

It would be foreign to our present purpose to inquire whether some miserable court intrigue forbad the passing into a law, of the King's declaration, for which both Houses of Parliament had agreed to return him thanks ; or whether it was never meant to be more than a blind till opportunity should serve the high church party of that day to crush their adversaries.* We have only to notice the consequences of the triumph of the exclusive principle on that occasion ; and those consequences are written in letters of human suffering, that will ever form an indelible stain upon the history of our national church. The presbyterians, afterwards excluded from the es-

* November 9th, the House of Commons, by their Speaker, thanked the King for his Declaration. November 28th, the Bill, making it law, was thrown out upon the second reading.

tablishment by the act of uniformity, which drove 2000 of their clergy at once from their benefices, formed separate meetings in defiance of the laws, and became the parents of many of the present dissenting congregations. They were subjected to every sort of vexatious interference ; fined, imprisoned, persecuted ; but such hostility has ever rather strengthened than subdued the religious body against which it has been directed. Accordingly, the ministers continued to preach and to teach ; they appointed successors, and the dissenting congregations still remain, though in many instances, the grounds of their objections to the church are changed. It is not indeed probable, that where liberty of private judgment in religious matters is allowed and exercised, the whole community can ever be comprehended in one church ; but had it not been for that fatal enactment, dissent would have probably been limited to a few wild enthusiasts, who, at times of strong excitement, might have gathered a certain following, which returning moderation would have again speedily dispersed ; or to those bodies of unitarians, with whom believers in the divinity of the Son of God cannot join in worship. As it is, that fatal act established in the ejected ministers and their successors, a nucleus, round which the floating elements of discontent of each succeeding generation have arranged themselves,

adopting the popular language of the day, varying in doctrine according to the prevailing opinions of the time, and constant only to one thing, which is, opposition to the church. Deeply as is to be lamented the departure from apostolic principle and precedent, which caused that schism, I do not suppose that any one will say that it can now be healed by a recurrence to the measures which would have prevented it; too many interests are engaged in its continuance; by a reconciliation too many vanities would be offended; too many feelings of animosity have been aroused, for us to suppose it possible that any general measure now passed, would have the effect of bringing those who are called the orthodox dissenters (and it is of them only that I have been speaking) into the pale of the church; and desirable as such an union would be if it were practicable, to expect that it can take place now, is rather to be guided by our wishes than by our judgment. All that we can do to smooth asperities, by refraining from intemperate language, by liberal dealing, and by personal courtesy, is, I feel sure, generally, if not universally done, by the ministers of the Church of England towards their dissenting brethren; and while we look back with regret upon the short-sighted and evil policy to which we trace their separation, and are without hope that its effects can be got over, we

are willing to concede to them the same credit for conscientiousness that we claim for ourselves, and are studious to live together in peace and good-will.

But though we can only partially, and by our individual conduct, rectify the errors of our forefathers, yet we may profit by experience of the evil that their ill-judged enactments have caused. If that schism cannot be healed, another may be prevented, or what would be little less injurious than a schism, the prevalence of party spirit and disunion within the church and among her members. The Apostle's words invite us to try and examine how this may be done, for his expression concerning divisions was not directed against seceders, so much as against those whose conduct produced disputes within the church; and the differences of opinion which may exist, nay, which must exist among ourselves upon subordinate points, may grow into divisions and unfit us for active co-operation in the service of our Divine Master. It is utterly impossible that any thing less than a continual interference of Divine Providence, or than a mathematical accuracy of definition, can make a considerable number of individuals think exactly the same, even upon one subject; and the more intricate and multifarious the subjects submitted to them, the more numerous and the more opposed will be the dis-

crepancies of their opinions. That no such miracle has been vouchsafed by Divine Providence is evident in the various and conflicting opinions which divide the christian world; and that no such accuracy of definition is employed to arrange the knowledge that is conveyed to us in scripture, is a truth too obvious to need being insisted on. When, therefore, we find a great majority of the followers of our Lord so far agreed as to yield an unfeigned assent to the doctrinal part of the articles of our church, we should be disposed to wonder at this coincidence, if we did not recollect that these are the truths which belong to our salvation, and therefore are "plainly and explicitly revealed, that we may do them, for they belong to us and to our children." Upon other and confessedly less important points, there naturally exist considerable differences. But surely they are not such differences as must of necessity engender divisions; if divisions arise, it can only be from our offensive manner of stating our opinions, or of expressing our thoughts upon those which are entertained by our brethren. If, while conversing with others, we insist upon terming our own peculiar notions orthodox, or call them, exclusively, "the truth," (though, of course, every one's opinions are, in his own estimation, both orthodox and true), we must expect that a discussion in which we thus

assume all that is contended for, will not be long carried on in the perfect spirit of christian charity; but from a conversation with a view to inquiry, it will degenerate into an argument for victory. Again, let me remind you, that there is no more certain way of creating or of perpetuating the spirit of party, than by inventing or by using party names as distinctions. If ever we are guilty of the practice, we are making divisions; and Paul would have directed his hearers to mark and to avoid us. Men will often throw the veil of zeal for the truth over their own evil inclinations; and it may happen that one will insinuate that the creed of another is not orthodox, solely, because that man's zeal puts to shame his own indolence; and on the other hand, it will perhaps be said, that a minister does not preach the gospel, solely, because he will not adopt a peculiar mode of speech and deportment, nor confine his preaching to one branch of christian doctrine. Oh, my reverend brethren, if these suppositions come home as facts to the heart of any here present, if we have been thus guilty of using party names, or thus encouraging party spirit, to us it may be truly said, there are divisions among you. There may be no schism, we may call ourselves brethren and members of one church, we may attend the same meetings,

and sometimes forward the same objects ; but we cannot zealously work together. The unity of spirit will be lost, and as that army, of which the several commanders, through jealousy, are not equally ready to hasten to the assistance of the first who may be attacked, will probably suffer defeat from a very inferior force ; so will our spiritual camp in vain try to keep out the foes that assail us, if there be division or coldness among its defenders. In saying this, however, I speak not of a growing evil ; I firmly believe we are less given to party than we were ; there is a greater willingness to look upon our cause as one, and our interests as embarked in the same vessel, than there was. Even during the few years that have elapsed since under different auspices I had the honour of addressing you from this place, I can perceive the growth of a more catholic feeling among the clergy, and a greater readiness to co-operate in any good work, without waiting to inquire by whom it was first proposed. And if those times and opportunities to which I have alluded in the earlier part of this discourse, could recur, and if a portion of our brethren in the ministry were to be suppliants to us to allow some indulgence to the scruples of their consciences, in matters not necessary, I feel certain that the church's answer would be given

in a very different tone, and that for the sake of preserving the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, we should be willing to forego in many cases a perfect uniformity of ceremonial observances.

If it were allowable to mention the name of one individual, whose ministry has been most influential to allay party feeling between the members of the portion of the church committed to his superintendence, that name would assuredly be our late lamented diocesan's; and the means he employed were, to teach us both by his precepts and his example to be instant in forwarding the great cause we have in hand, and the eternal interests committed to our charge. How many a place of worship where the pure word of God is now preached to hundreds of attentive ears, owes its existence to his zeal for the souls of his flock. How many have been commenced at his suggestion; forwarded by his exhortations; assisted by his liberality. How many more will be raised for the increasing population of this vast diocese, through the instrumentality of that society which he founded, and bequeathed to us, and whose claims he advocated for the last time, as you well remember, while in a state of bodily weakness and suffering, that would have kept at home any one less zealous for his Master's ser-

vice. How many a charitable institution has been enriched by his donations, and pleaded for by his voice from our pulpits. It was by directing our energies to these and similar objects, by teaching us to be intent upon the temporal and spiritual welfare of our flocks, and of mankind, that Bishop Ryder strove, and I trust in a great measure succeeded, in eradicating party and sectarian feelings from our breasts. May we endeavour to walk in his steps, not only after the pattern of those more exalted virtues which ensured him our reverence, but also in the more familiar qualities of kindness and courtesy which endeared him to our hearts. Born in the highest station, and raised by his Sovereign to the chief authority in the church, let the humblest of those whose profession placed them in contact with him, say whether he ever appeared to remember these distinctions in his intercourse with them; whether his address was not rather that of an equal than of a superior, and whether a vestige of his authority was ever seen, except to enforce the performance of duty.

Thus living and thus engaged, and armed against the fear of death, by a lively faith in his Saviour, he was summoned to give an account of his stewardship; and I dare not, nay, I wish not to breathe a kinder prayer for any of his

clergy, my brethren and fellow-labourers, or for myself, than that whenever it becomes our turn to obey the same call, our last end may be as full of hope to ourselves, and of consolation to our surviving friends, as his was.

**J. Moore, High-street,
Birmingham.**

THE SABBATH:

A SERMON

ON GENESIS II. 1—3.

PREACHED IN THE WESLEYAN CHAPEL,
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THE SABBATH.

"THUS THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH WERE FINISHED, AND ALL THE HOST OF THEM. AND ON THE SEVENTH DAY GOD ENDED HIS WORK WHICH HE HAD MADE; AND HE RESTED ON THE SEVENTH DAY FROM ALL HIS WORK WHICH HE HAD MADE. AND GOD BLESSED THE SEVENTH DAY, AND SANCTIFIED IT; BECAUSE THAT IN IT HE HAD RESTED FROM ALL HIS WORK, WHICH GOD CREATED AND MADE."—GEN. II. 1-3.

THE subject presented to our consideration in this portion of holy writ must at all times be important, referring as it does to a duty of continual obligation, and with which so many others are connected. It is a subject, too, which will always supply a test by which to try both the character and strength of religious feeling in individuals, and the hold which religion has on the public mind. More truly than many are willing to acknowledge, may it be said of a people now, as once it was said of the Jews, that the Sabbath is a sign between them and God. Blessings, numberless and invaluable, are connected with its proper observance. God invariably honours them who thus honour him. And on the other hand, the evils, moral, social, and even political, which flow from its profanation, it would not be possible to calculate. In this respect, also, "they that despise him shall be lightly esteemed."

Various circumstances combine to render this subject peculiarly important at the present time. Public attention has been largely drawn to it. The gross and daring violations of it which, especially in the metropolis, are becoming more and more frequent, have painfully impressed the feelings of all those—and their number is not small—who so connect national prosperity with the divine blessing, as to be persuaded that national ungodliness

will sooner or later issue in national judgments, which no institutions, however wisely constructed, however powerfully supported, will be able to avert. From these impressions have arisen a vast number of petitions, numerously signed, and respectfully soliciting the attention of the legislature. And within the last few years, various measures connected with what has been called the Sabbath Question have been earnestly debated,—with what success I need not now say.

I shall be justified, I am sure, in embracing the present opportunity of addressing you on a subject every way so momentous, always important, and just now so peculiarly interesting. As far as I may be able to do it within the time which may be occupied by a single discourse, I wish to lay before you, in some consecutive observations, an outline of what appears to me to be the Scriptural doctrine of the Sabbath, so far as we ourselves, as Christians, are concerned in it. In such a discussion of the subject you will not expect from me anything, even approaching to novelty. My object is entirely practical, and in seeking to accomplish it, I shall be well contented if I am enabled to stir up your mind by way of remembrance.

I.—I shall direct your attention, in the first place, to the SABBATH, considered in its INSTITUTION and MORAL OBLIGATION.

The words I have read as the text, are evidently words of direct institution. “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished; and God rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh Day, and sanctified it.”

Some persons, in order to lessen the obligation of the Sabbath, and to take from it a large portion of the religiousness of its character, have argued for its Jewish origin; and, as a sort of corollary, have held that under the Christian dispensation it is a purely ecclesiastical appointment, and therefore capable of ecclesiastical relaxation. As though saints’ days, as they are termed, and the Lord’s day, stood on the same footing, and were possessed of equal authority. By such persons the statement of the text is regarded as merely proleptical: as inserted in this portion of the sacred record, only in reference to the subsequent commandment given to the Jews by Moses. A simple-hearted reader

of the Scriptures, having no object in view but his own instruction in righteousness, would never suspect any thing of this kind in language seemingly so plain and explicit as is the paragraph before us. Read it again. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. *And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it*; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Can words be plainer? You have them in the simplest form of narrative. They state facts which had actually taken place, and they state these facts in their proper order and mutual connexion. "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it." He *then* blessed it; established it as an instrument of good for his creature, man. He *then* sanctified it; established it as a day to be separated from lower and merely subordinate occupancy, and devoted to the immediate and special service of God. And this view of the text is supported by the wording of the fourth commandment. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." It was therefore already known to the Jews, and known under that particular name. "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord"—not, does now bless and hallow,—but, "wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Thus plainly referring the first institution to a former period.

And very instructive is this view of the subject. Thus was man, even in his state of innocency, reminded that his time was not his own, to be employed entirely at his own discretion. A rent was reserved to be regularly paid to the great Proprietor, whose claims to the whole were thus asserted, and to be acknowledged, from the beginning. If in dressing and keeping the garden he provided for his inferior pleasures and wants, by a weekly cessation of labour he was taught that richer delights were to be enjoyed, and higher advantages secured. And when it is recollected that the Sabbath is itself a type of heaven, which is represented to us as "the Sabbath-keeping, which remaineth for the people of God," little doubt can be entertained but that Adam was thus instructed, that earth was not his permanent abode; that

he was always to refer his present state to the illimitable future which stretched before him, and by habitual obedience and strengthened holiness, to wait for his undying removal to "the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world."

Delightful would be the sabbaths of Paradise. Man, admitted to special audience and communion with his Maker, would feel himself made but little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honour: and seeing in all this condescension the wonderful and overflowing goodness of God, beholding in all nature the expressions of divine wisdom, and power, and love, would pour forth the fulness of a grateful and adoring heart, in hymnings whose constantly recurring theme would be, "O Lord, our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, who hast set thy glory above the heavens."

This view of the first institution of the Sabbath will enable us to account for that very singular fact, the great antiquity of the division of time into weeks, generally marked by the recurrence of the seventh day as one of religious festivity. For this hebdomadal division there appears no natural ground. The day is marked by the revolution of the earth on its own axis. The revolution of the moon suggested the collection of days into months. The earth's revolution round the sun gives us our year. And thus, therefore, it is written: "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years." Nor will the Mosaic institution of the Sabbath account for this, any more than the Mosaic institution of sacrifices will account for their ancient and universal connexion with religious worship. The Sabbath and sacrifices both appear to have had their origin long before the time of Moses; and on the admission of what we think is the plain fact, that the law of the Sabbath commenced with man's active life, and was one of the earliest under which he was placed, all the phenomena of the case are explained. The observance of the Sabbath would thus be a custom carried with them by men in all their subsequent wanderings and establishments; a custom, the contrary to which no human memory could show. It would only be as communities, through various circumstances, sank in savagism, (a deteriorated, and not an original state,) that the observance of the Sabbath would cease, and in some cases, the memory of it perish.

And thus, too, can we account for the peculiar, and very remarkable position, which the Sabbath occupies in the law as given by Moses. Every attentive reader of the Mosaic law knows that it is divisible into two distinct portions, very unequal in point of length, and in many respects not less so in point of importance. These two portions have often, and not improperly, been termed, the moral, and the ceremonial law; the latter constituting that ritual which was a shadow of good things to come, and which is done away in Christ; the former, that which is of perpetual obligation, and which the Spirit of God writes upon the heart of all who personally, and for themselves, accept the covenant of redeeming love. The distinction between the one and the other was very strongly marked at the time they were given. The moral law was spoken by God himself, in the hearing of the Israelites, and afterwards inscribed on two tables of stone. These were called, emphatically, "the Tables of the Testimony;" and "the writing was the writing of God." And this was especially the covenant between God and the people. They open by a declaration which presents the unchangeable, eternal blessing with which God blesses all who are in covenant with him; a blessing, the possession and enjoyment of which even death cannot interrupt; "I am the Lord thy God." And then follow those moral duties which constitute his unchanging will for man upon earth. It is therefore written concerning these,—
 "And he wrote upon the tables *the words of the covenant*, the ten commandments." In evident allusion to this solemn transaction is the language of Jeremiah. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.—After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." They were not to come again "to the mount that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words," there to receive the commands of God, written on tables of stone; but they were to come to Mount Zion, that the same law, but connected with clearer discoveries of the mercy of God, and with the promise of pardon in our Lord Jesus, might be written on their hearts. Thus, therefore, does the apostle speak on the subject:—"Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink,

but with the spirit of the living God ; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart."

That this law is still binding is evident, not merely from the character of its commandments, but likewise from the manner in which it is spoken of in the New Testament. " I had not known sin but by the law : for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." : And of this law it is said, " Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." And thus is another injunction recognized, binding equally under the Jewish and Christian dispensations, and recognized in language which shows the ten commandments to be unrepealed,—“ Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth."

Now, among these " words of the covenant," these 'holy, and just, and good commandments,' recognized by the apostle as still in force, even as to a temporal promise which they contain,—among these we find the law enjoining the observance of the Sabbath. Sacrifices are not placed here ; circumcision is not placed here ; but here we find the law of the Sabbath. It is true, that we likewise find it in that portion of the Jewish law which may be termed, not only ceremonial, but also civil and municipal : but it is not less true that we find other commandments there, concerning the moral character and perpetual obligation of which there surely can be no doubt. In the ritual and political code given to the Jews by Moses, we find, for instance, the second and third commandments, and the fifth, and sixth, and seventh, and eighth, and ninth : but does this affect their moral character ? The truth is, that the universal law, as to most of its injunctions, is invested in another part of the law as given by Moses, with ceremonial and political relations, and in the abrogation of the ceremonial law, these injunctions, *so far as possessing a ceremonial and political character*, are abrogated likewise : but *in so far as they belong to the moral code*, as they are " the words of the covenant," they remain as binding as ever.

We view the Sabbath, therefore, as being of moral and perpetual obligation ; nor is there any method of reasoning which would remove it from the place assigned it by God himself, which will not equally apply to the whole law. If the ceremonial law enables you to chisel out the fourth commandment from the tables

of stone, it will supply you with instruments to get rid of the remaining nine. Remove one stone from the well-compacted fabric, and you have so loosened the whole that the rest only remain upon sufferance, and may be taken away by any to whom their removal may be matter of taste, or convenience, or advantage. Remember that it is not the Sabbath alone which the divine commandment makes sacred. Thus is property fenced round by the command,—“Thou shalt not steal.” Thus is marriage declared to be a religious contract; thus are all the charities of domestic life sanctified and guarded; thus is woman herself protected, and her proper place in society fixed; thus is purity made at once a duty and a privilege, by the commands, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” and, “Honour thy father and thy mother.” Thus, too, are the mutual communications between man and man, and especially those which are needful for the purposes of civil justice, rendered sacred by the command, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour:” and thus is human life put under the immediate guardianship of God by the command which says, “Thou shalt do no murder.” In the same position with the rest, and therefore, equally possessing moral character and obligation, is the command,—“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.”

And there is another view of the subject of which we may not lose sight. The ten commandments are but the external declarations of that law which God writes on the hearts of all with whom his new covenant is established: an external declaration constantly and supremely important, as supplying the rule by which all pretensions to spiritual religion are to be tried. Now, it is a fact that wherever vital religion exists, and in proportion to the influence which it exerts, the Sabbath is loved and honoured. Luther spoke of the doctrine of Justification by faith as the article of a standing or a falling church. You may take the Sabbath as furnishing a similar test, both of personal, and—allow me the expression—of ecclesiastical and national piety. The man that loves God, loves the Sabbath of God. And it has been well said by Dr. Chalmers, that ‘you may form your estimate of the morality of a nation, by noticing the hold which the Sabbath has upon them.’ Brethren, a Sabbathless population, polish and tinsel the surface as you will, is rotten at the very core. Do with such a population all that human wisdom can

prescribe. Build according to the prescribed rules of architecture. Cultivate according to the prescribed rules of agriculture. Your palaces, your villas, your cottages, your fields, your gardens, are all reposing over a scarcely slumbering volcano, which by and by will burst forth in resistless and wide-spreading ruin.

Nor are these views affected by the change of the day from the seventh to the first, that change having been established by competent authority. The right of the Son of God when he appeared as the Son of man, to make the alteration, will be doubted by none who believe that 'the government is on his shoulders,' and that 'all power is given unto him in heaven and earth. And to this he alludes in his own significant declaration, "For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day." The facts of the case show, indeed, that the process of the change was gradual. And for this we may easily account. In point of authority, the whole Jewish system passed away when the sacrifice of Atonement had been offered, and the great High Priest, having passed into the Holiest of all, took his place as "a priest upon his throne." But yet, in condescension to the strong prejudices of the Jews, various allowances were made for them, as well as for such of them as acknowledged Jesus of Nazareth as the true Messiah. Still, the great principles connected with the abrogation were laid down, and the allowances for human weakness so narrowly and definitely circumscribed, that the practical abolition of the whole ritual within a very limited period was secured. The moment that the professing Hebrew Christian demanded for his prejudices anything beyond a compassionate toleration, he was met by unequivocal rebuke. Timothy, a Hebrew only by maternal descent, "Paul took and circumcised because of the Jews:" but his indulgence had its regular limits. "But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised." When "false brethren unawares brought in" would have imposed their "yoke of bondage," the Apostle, regardless of the peace which is founded on error, met them with the most decided opposition, rather choosing,—at what expense of suffering they who can understand the mind of St. Paul will easily imagine,—rather choosing to forfeit the affection of his Galatian friends, than to put the truth of God in jeopardy. "To whom we gave place by subjection, *no, not for an hour*, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." Hence, among his controversies

with the Jews, and Judaizing Christians, we find him referring (as in the epistle to the Colossians) to the Sabbath, considered in its Jewish aspects, and as one of the Jewish ordinances ; and speaking of it as one of those things which were to “perish with the using.” By the inspired governors of the church the principle of the observance of the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath was laid down. So we find in the Acts, “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to eat bread, Paul preached to them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech till near midnight.” And thus does the Apostle’s direction to the Corinthians become very significant ;— “Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”—On the first day of the week. As though he wished to remind them that at the close of the week they would see how they had been prospering ; and that on the day in which God was to be specially served in religious exercises,—as in breaking of bread, and attending on the ministry of the word,—they were to prepare for doing good and distributing, thus sanctifying their fund of charity, and connecting their benevolence with religion. By the close of the Apostolic age, as we learn from St. John, this day, thus consecrated to spiritual duties, had received the name by which, in the last book of the scriptural canon, it is designated.— “I was in the Spirit on THE LORD’S DAY.” And thus does the Sabbath come down to us as a Christian Institution, commemorative of the accomplished work of redemption by the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On this glad day, a brighter scene
Of glory was display’d
By God, the Eternal Word, than when
This universe was made !
He rises, who mankind has bought
With grief and pain extreme :
’Twas great to speak a world from nought ;
’Twas greater to redeem.

II. We are thus led to the consideration of the Sabbath in its PROPER DESIGN and CHARACTER.

It is, in the first place, as its original name imports, *a day of rest*. Not of inactivity and indolence. ‘Although the works

were finished from the foundation of the world,' yet our Lord, when accused by the Jews of breaking the Sabbath by the cure of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, replied, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." From the work of creation God ceased, when 'the heavens and earth were finished, and all the host of them;' but in the work of preserving and ruling all things, he is continually engaged. For man, the Sabbath is a day of rest from all merely secular employment, whether for profit or for pleasure. Since the fall especially, man has to provide, by active industry for his own sustenance, and the duties of our temporal calling are enforced by religious sanctions and obligations. For the performance of these, six days are allotted. "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thou hast to do." But, as "the seventh is the sabbath of the Lord our God," all our ordinary labours and employments are to be suspended: both in body and mind are we to rest from them.

And in this appointment we see both the Wisdom and the Goodness of the Creator. His Wisdom, for that the institution is so completely adapted to the nature of man, whether considered corporeally or intellectually. We need these regularly recurring intervals of repose. Before a Committee appointed by a late House of Commons to consider the Sabbath question, an eminent physician, of long experience, bore the most explicit testimony to this. This is just the proportion of rest after labour, and its consequent exhaustion, which man requires, in order to fit him for labouring again. And thus we see the goodness of God. Man needs the Sabbath, and the Sabbath is made for him. Its value, especially to the labouring poor, is incalculable. It rests the wearied body. It affords relief to the careful and anxious mind. The thoughts and feelings may now flow in a channel different from that in which, for the preceding six days, they have been flowing. The calm and holy pleasures always connected with a properly observed Sabbath refresh the whole man, and thus is he enabled to undertake the next portion of life's journey with renewed vigour. And I repeat it, the Sabbath is especially valuable to the labouring classes of the community. Were there no Sabbath, the additional quantity of labour thus thrown into the market, would necessarily lower its price, and seven days of labour would bring the labourer no more remuneration than six. His rest day being thus taken away from him, labour would become increasingly toil-

some to the body, and wearing to the spirits. The loss of the Sabbath injures any man: to the poor it would be the infliction of a grievous wrong.

From this it must follow, that no man has a right to deprive another of that which God has given him by the appointment of the Sabbath. And therefore the law provides for dependents as well as for principals. "In it thou shalt do no manner of work; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor the stranger that is within thy gates." If the Bible be true, the Sabbath is one of the original and indefeasible rights of man, and one in the enjoyment of which the legislature of every Christian country is bound to protect him. And on this ground, as well as on what is due from society to God, upon whom nations are as completely dependent as individuals, and by whom they rise and fall, flourish and decay, on this ground it is that in a Christian country we ask for the abolition by law of Sabbath-trading. On religious grounds we may call on man to resist all temptation to wrong, however powerful it may be. Whatever the sacrifice, he is to do right. If his customers threaten to forsake his shop unless he will keep it open on the Lord's day,—if his irreligious neighbour refuses to close his,—the case is a trying one; but it is one for which the Scriptures provide. It was a trying case for Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego when they stood before the infuriate monarch, and saw plainly that the path of duty led directly to the burning fiery furnace. The case was a trying one, but the duty was clear. God is to be obeyed at all hazards. But still, in a Christian country, a man has a right to demand that in matters fairly cognizable by law, he be not exposed to temptation so strong as to amount to moral compulsion. There are trials too strong for imperfect and unestablished virtue, and in such a case as the Sabbath presents, the legislature of a Christian land, is bound to provide against their occurrence. Among the characters of evil men described in scripture, none comes to us so deeply branded as that of "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin." Now the man who says,—"You shall serve me on the Lord's day, or I will not trade with you at all," follows the example of Jeroboam. The legislator who does all he can to prevent the enactment of laws by which the Sabbath would be protected by the prohibition of trading on that day, follows the example of Jeroboam. They have sinned

against the Lord, and let them be sure that their sin will find them out.

And let not such persons call themselves the friends of the poor. The French infidels of the revolutionary school, made, I believe, a great parade of their benevolence. To religion they made no great pretensions, but they were the friends of the people, and especially the friends of the poor. And how did they prove their friendship? Why, thus. God had given to man Fifty two rest-days in the year, and these friends of the poor, in their new calendar, reduced them to Thirty-six; fixing every tenth day, instead of every seventh, as a day of rest; and thus endeavouring by a new division of time, to obliterate the very recollection of Christianity from the land. Let every tradesman and mechanic remember that the Sabbath is a gift of God's benevolence. And whenever he finds a public man opposed to that legislative protection which would secure to him its undisturbed possession, whatever else he may be, he is not a friend to the poor; whatever may be his deserts, he deserves no place in the legislature of a Christian country. All who possess the elective franchise, ought to look well to this. So far as the welfare of a country depends on man, on these depend the welfare of their own. Public measures come from public men, but public men give not themselves the places which they hold. If every religious elector, whether he wants the amendment of our civil institutions, or the preservation of them, would make the Sabbath question a *sine qua non*,—a testing one,—it would soon be decided. And thus would all religious electors act, if they only carried out to its proper extent our Lord's rule,—“Seek ye **FIRST** the kingdom of God and his righteousness.” If a man who is seeking to become a legislator sees that even his religious constituents do, in point of fact, postpone religious considerations to political ones, what can he think but that they regard religion as a mere profession, something to be talked about rather than acted upon; that it is “*a very good thing in its place*,” but that that place, wherever else it may be, is not the supreme one. Let Christian electors do their duty, and in no public place in the empire will he who advocates the suppression of Sabbath trading, be refused a hearing, or treated with disrespect.

And now that I am on this part of the subject, allow me to call your attention to an expression, which seems intended to put

down all arguments in favour of a legislative protection of the Sabbath. It is said,—‘*You cannot make man religious by Act of Parliament.*’ And this is to be considered as so decisive that nothing more can be said on the question.—‘*You cannot make man religious by Act of Parliament?*’ Very true. Who doubts it? Certainly no man that knows what religion is. But what has this to do with the suppression of Sunday trading? Just nothing at all. The proposition is so thoroughly inapplicable to the case, and, as thus used, so utterly senseless, that I cannot bring myself to the persuasion that it is used sincerely. The logic of it, and the religion of it, are on a par. Try the principle which it is intended to assert on a few other cases, and you will soon discover its value. You cannot make a man truth-loving and faithful by Act of Parliament; *therefore*, the man who bears false witness against his neighbour shall go unpunished, and men be unprotected from perjury. You cannot make a man honest by Act of Parliament; *therefore*, property shall not be guarded, theft shall not be punished, by law. You cannot make men meek, and merciful, and forgiving, by Act of Parliament; *therefore*, you shall remove all the legislative fences which guard human life. You cannot make men religious by Act of Parliament; *therefore*, you must not interfere with Sunday trading. The premises are good in all these cases; the conclusions bad. All the *therefores* are alike worthless. The truth is, that they who use the phrase are unable to answer arguments to which they are resolved not to yield, and therefore they have recourse to this method of evading them, and evasive they must know it to be. Who, so far as the Sabbath question is concerned,—who dreams of making men religious by Act of Parliament? It is asked that Sabbath trading may be put down, and that all, thus having the day as their own, may spend it as they choose, with this one limitation, that if they choose to spend it irreligiously, they shall do it in that way which shall not expose others to the moral compulsion of spending it irreligiously too.

But, secondly, it is likewise a *hallowed day*: one separated from common and secular employments, dedicated to holy purposes, and constituted, by divine appointment, an instrument of spiritual blessedness. “*And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.*” It is a day which in a special sense belongs to God, and of the actual observance of which, God is to be made the direct object.

It is "the Sabbath of the Lord our God." It is a day of rest from worldly labour; it is a day of religious devotion.

These two views of the proper character of the day are to be always united in our conception of it. Many not only allow it to be a day of rest, but would, as such, contend for it. The whole question, however, as to the proper observance of the day, depends on what is its proper character and design. If it be *merely* a day of rest, then will there be no great inconsistency in filling up such portions of it as are not allotted to indolence and sloth, with what are called Sabbath recreations: but if it be a hallowed day, consecrated as the specially reserved property of God, then, as its character and design are eminently religious, so also must be its observance. Thus, in the text, you have,—“God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.” In the law,—“The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.” Under the prophets they were called, ‘the Sabbaths of the Lord.’ Christ claimed to be ‘the Lord of the Sabbath:’ and the Christian Sabbath is eminently, “the Lord’s day.” The separation of the day being once admitted, its religious character is beyond dispute. If there be a Sabbath at all, it is a religious Sabbath. And reflection will show you the wisdom and the goodness of such an institution. It is especially adapted for man as he now is. Were no time fixed for the consideration of spiritual and divine subjects, they would soon be forgotten. It has passed into a proverbial expression, that “any time is no time.” The day and its employment being fixed, the return of the one reminds us of the necessity of the other. The great law of association and habit is here brought into exercise, as usefully, as powerfully. And therefore ought we with thankfulness to acknowledge the goodness and mercy exhibited by the Sabbath. It is indeed made for man. As of every commandment of God, so of this particularly. may we say, it is “for our good always.” It is an institution wisely adapted to our circumstances, and mercifully intended for our advantage. Opportunity is thus afforded us of directing exclusive attention to the things that belong to our peace. Thus may the forgetful be admonished, and the careless aroused. Thus may man be prevented from becoming a mere earth-gazing animal, and taught to employ the sublime countenance which God has given him, in looking heavenward to the home in which he may for ever dwell. The proper dignity of man consists in this, that he is not merely

rational and immortal, but 'a creature capable of God.' We need his favour. It is our life, Chosen by us, it shall be, when our flesh and heart fail, 'the strength of our heart, and our portion for ever.' Forgetfulness of this is our easily besetting sin; and great is the love which provides that by the regular return of the Sabbath, our attention shall be forcibly directed to it. The seventh day comes. The business of the world ceases, and every thing reminds us of a business infinitely more important. Lulled to spiritual slumber by the busy hum of men, its hush awakens us. Its very silence finds a voice. It is a standing call both to the unconverted, and to the converted. Every thing about it, whether its stillness or its activity, tells of the soul, and of eternity, and calls us to 'prepare to meet our God.'

III.—Such being the character and design of the Sabbath, I remark, in the third place, ON THE PROPER WAY OF OBSERVING IT.

As it is a *day of rest*, there must be cessation from worldly employments and labours. "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt do no manner of work." The law plainly refers to all that belongs to our temporal calling. In the New Testament we are enjoined to be 'not slothful in business;' and for this industrious application to the duties connected with our situation in life, the 'Six days' are allotted. In them we are to labour, and do all our work. But all this is to cease on the seventh day. Life, indeed, is to be preserved, and for this, fire, and food, and clothing are necessary. But this is a necessity fixed by God himself. So, also, is that by which 'the ox, or the ass is to be loosed from the stall, and led away to watering.' Such cases, growing, we repeat, out of a necessity fixed by God himself, and not arising from our own cupidity or carelessness, can scarcely be called exceptions to the general rule. A conscience at once enlightened and tender will find no difficulty in discovering what belongs to the rule, and what belongs to the exception. Here, too, does the solemn axiom hold good,—'If the eye be single the whole body shall be full of light.' If religion be burthensome to us, and we wish to reduce its claims to the lowest quantity compatible with their existence, we may easily find methods of evading the law of the Sabbath, as we may of evading any other

portion of the law : but if we fear and love God, and desire to do his will, and are convinced that in doing his will we are doing essential service to ourselves, this commandment, and every commandment, will receive from us a large and liberal construction, and our great enquiry be, not how we may evade, but how we may obey. And thus acting, the Sabbath will be made, in all temporal respects, as far as possible, a day of rest and leisure. As much of what relates immediately to personal and domestic cleanliness and comfort, as may,—judging as in the presence of God,—be attended to on the preceding day, or postponed to the next, will be avoided. And where he who thus fears God is the head of a family, this will be the rule of his household. He remembers that the law speaks of his man servants, and of his maid servants, and he takes care that they have their Sabbath as well as himself.

But the Sabbath is more than a day of rest. It is likewise a *hallowed day*. A day which its great Author has consecrated, and set apart to sacred objects and purposes. In the observance of it, therefore, there will be a devotional occupation of the leisure created by a cessation of worldly employments.

I have not time to enter minutely into this branch of the subject. Nor is it necessary that I should. It will be sufficient that I direct your attention to the three great divisions of religious duty;—Private,—Public,—and Domestic.

To Private devotion more time than usual should be given on the Sabbath. It is, indeed, every day our duty to enter into our closet, and shut to the door, and there pray to our heavenly Father who seeth in secret. To the proper care of the soul this is indispensable. But there are very many who, from their circumstances in life, can spend but comparatively little time in these hallowing exercises. And even where more leisure is enjoyed, still, a more extensive engagement in them at stated periods, cannot but be greatly profitable, and will, in most instances, be absolutely necessary. There are duties which cannot be neglected with safety, and which for their proper performance, require the leisure of the Sabbath. Self-examination, and meditation on the Scripture, I may particularly mention, and the more extended supplications and thanksgivings to which these will give rise. Take care that you be alone with God on his own day. Your spirits want calming. The hurry of the six days will materially affect even the public exercises of the seventh, if there be not the

recollection, the self-possession, for which a careful attendance to the duties of the closet will be found indispensable. Devotional reflection is essential to spiritual growth and establishment, and for this the Sabbath furnishes the proper opportunity.

And to Public Worship special attention is on this day to be paid. Not, indeed, that it is to be altogether omitted from the six days of labour. Our secular employments will not be the less successful for being thus sanctified by the word of God and prayer. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord our God; and it behoves us to honour him, and seek his promised blessing, by assembling ourselves in the house of prayer. I need not dwell on either the obligations or the advantages of public worship, generally considered. Nor need I remark at any length on this particular branch of Sabbath duties. In all ages has this been the practice of the church of God. It was so before the coming of our Lord. He himself sanctioned it by his presence in the synagogue on the Sabbath-day. And thus did they act to whom, as the first guides of the church, the Spirit of Truth was given. During that peculiar period when, though the Jewish ritual was no longer binding, its actual observance had not ceased, so long as any sacredness might be supposed to attach to the seventh day, we find it observed by the apostles in their attendance upon the Sabbath Services of the synagogue. At the same time, however, they and the disciples assembled together on the first day of the week, the new and Christian Sabbath, for breaking of bread, and the ministry of the word,—that is, for the public worship of God. And thus has it continued ever since.

But, besides the exercises of private devotion and public worship, there is a third class of duties to which special attention should be paid on the Sabbath. To domestic duties all heads of families should devote part of the leisure which the Sabbath affords. Family religion is one of the plainest requisitions in the Bible: but for its efficient exercise, at least in the majority of cases, more time is required than the employments of the six days will allow. The Christian parent has been able to spend very little time in religious conversation, and catechetical instruction during the week. But the Sabbath-day comes, and now he can gather together those whom God has placed under his care, and teach them diligently the words which are in his own heart. Nor can this obligation be transferred to others. It may be that Christian

charity has cared for the neglected children of the poor in your own neighbourhood, and has gathered them together in some Sabbath-school to supply the lack of parental service. But this frees not you who fear God from the obligation of training up your own children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. O see to it that there be, in your own house, a gathering together of all that belong to you, on this sacred day. Let family worship be more extended. Let scriptural reading, catechetical instruction, religious conversation, have their allotted season. Thus shall you have a church in your own house, and your family be a nursery for the church in the world.

Supposing these duties to have their proper time allotted them, the Sabbath, in the intervals that remain, and especially to the young and active Christian, presents very favourable opportunities for good-doing. Personal and family religion may not, on any account, be neglected. We are not to injure ourselves to benefit others. But, these duties not being omitted, there are many plans of spiritual usefulness in which we may engage. I may just mention,—it is all I can now do,—the visitation of the sick, the distribution of religious tracts, and,—(their object and plan being decidedly religious,)—Sunday-schools, for the instruction and impression of the neglected, ignorant, and too often vicious children of those who are themselves ignorant, or irreligious, or both.

In thus describing Christian Sabbath-keeping, I have described practices which, according to some, will cover the whole day with a gloomy obscurity altogether inconsistent with its character. ‘The Sabbath was made for man,’ we are told,—‘it is a day for recreation and refreshment,—we are not to be tied down to the severity of the ancient Pharisees, or of the Puritans of a former day in our own country.’ Let us examine the intimations which such expressions are intended to convey.

And first, we are told, very gravely,—“The Sabbath was made for man.” Yes, indeed, so it was,—but is the objector aware of the force of the text which he thus chooses so triumphantly to quote? ‘The Sabbath was made for man.’ For *MAN*? Not for *THE JEW*? Yes, it is true,—more true than the objector dreamt when he got hold of a text which he so little understood, it is true that the Sabbath was made *for man*; for man anywhere, and everywhere; not for one single nation, and that only for the

limited period of their national existence. How forcible are right words! Let the text be remembered. Our Lord, knowing the proper character and design of the Sabbath, pronounces that 'the Sabbath was made for MAN.' But that is not all. The text teaches us something beyond. 'The Sabbath was MADE for man.' *Made* for him? Then, by whom? Not, surely, by himself. The doctrine of the Scripture is express, that the Sabbath is the Lord's. It was made for man by God himself. It was, as we have seen, by divine wisdom and goodness, constituted for the spiritual and temporal advantage of man. And what follows from this? The Sabbath was made for man,—and *therefore* man may do what he pleases with it, and upon it? He may pervert it,—he may unmake it altogether? Are *these* the inferences to be drawn from the scriptural fact,—that the Sabbath was made for man? And are we willing to apply the principle generally? Is every thing that God has made for man, man's absolute property, to be dealt with at his own pleasure? How, then, shall God judge the world? Brethren, the Sabbath *was* made for man,—made for him by Him in whom are combined in solemn and delightful union, Paternal kindness, and Sovereign authority. God made the Sabbath for man, because he saw that man needed the Sabbath. And the proper inference is, that man is to deal with it as with every other gift of God. He is to employ it according to its original character and design. As he is the subject of God, to this he is bound: as he is possessed of moral agency he may choose to act otherwise: but 'if ye do so, ye have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin will find you out.'

But, we are told, the Sabbath is a day for recreation and refreshment. Very true. And if spent according to the divine appointment, so it is. We appeal to all who fear and love God, whether this day is not to you 'the best of all the seven.' You awake in the morning, not to your usual toil, but to that service of God which all who love him find to be perfect freedom. How often have you exclaimed,—'This is the day which the Lord has made: we will be glad and rejoice in it.' You have gone through its sacred hours, remembering the command of God by Isaiah;—
 "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking

thine own words." Thus have you done ; and has the day been one of gloom ? Nay,—but you understand, because you experience the annexed promise,—“ Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord ; and I will cause thee to ride on the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father.” They who properly observe the Sabbath are blessed with true happiness,—“ Thou shalt delight thyself in the Lord ;”—they experience a real exaltation both in character and circumstances,—“ I will cause thee to ride on the high places of the earth ;”—and they have the grace and providence of God for their portion,—“ and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob.” Whereas, the violators of the Sabbath, whatever station in society they occupy, are always and evidently an unblest class.

In the higher ranks, Sabbath-breaking is always connected with irreligion, and with irreligion there will be a real and wasting, though, perhaps, a disguised profligacy. And here will apply the unchanging rule of the moral government of God,—“ They that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.” In an age of general enlightenment, nothing but high moral worth can ensure a continuance of the respect which, in a former period, might be paid to rank alone. They who among the noble and rich of our land habitually disregard the Sabbath, and by their example and influence teach others to disregard it, are undermining the foundations which support the position they occupy. I wish our nobles and senators would remember the warning which providence presented them in the case of France half a century ago. From a Sabbathless nobility descended the influence which corrupted the whole mass of the population, and especially of that metropolitan population which surrounded them ; and the rank which was unsupported and unguarded by moral power, was swept away by the earliest blasts of that fearful tempest, which its own godless folly had mainly contributed to raise.

Among the operative classes, the evils of Sabbath-breaking are, if possible, still worse. Worse, in that there are not only the usual moral evils, but also that the temporal circumstances are invariably affected, and often very seriously injured. The Sabbath-breaker must have his Saint Monday, because his toilsome, exciting recreations on the preceding day, have unfitted him for his accustomed duties. And if you take the expense of the Sabbath pleasures, and the loss of the next day, (perhaps of other days,) you will not won-

der at the undeniable fact that the Sabbath-breaking, in point of worldly respectability and comfort, is far below the Sabbath-keeping population. Go to those places of worship in which the congregations may be principally supplied by the poorer classes, and mark the decency, the respectability of the appearance of the families who thus honour God. And mark the appearance of those who, on the very morning of the Sabbath, are wandering about the streets in their rags and dirt, or issuing forth from the spirit shop, having already spent in dissipation and poison what would have found bread for their family for half the week. Contrast the one with the other ; and can you doubt but that it is a moral and governing providence which thus affixes the seal of approbation to the observance of the Sabbath, and marks its violation with the evident stigma of the divine displeasure ?

Let me give you an anecdote which will further illustrate this. A few years ago, while residing in a populous manufacturing district, returning home one evening from the performance of ministerial duties, I was accosted by a man in a state of intoxication, who yet seemed resolved to enter into conversation with me. He acknowledged that his conduct was wrong, and said that he was continually forming resolutions of amendment. He was poor and uncomfortable because he was a drunkard, and a drunkard because he was a Sabbath-breaker. ' Many a time,' said he, ' I leave my own house on Sunday morning to go to a place of worship ; but then, the public houses are open. I get past one, or two ; and at the door of the third there stands, perhaps, an old acquaintance. He invites me in, and then it is all over with me. I spend the money I should keep my family with, and have then to work hard all the week, and to struggle at the same time with headache and hunger !' I shall never forget his concluding words. They were spoken with the energy of deep feeling. The poor fellow had talked himself sober. " *Sir, if the great folks want to keep us poor folks sober, they should shut up the traps that catch us.*"

Need I speak of the moral evils of Sabbath-breaking ? They are known to be extensive and deadly. Let closet philosophers say as they will, morals cannot long exist without religion, nor religion without the Sabbath. Go to the outskirts of your cities and towns, and see the juvenile Sabbath-breakers : the young gamblers on the small scale which their means admit : the some-

what older ones prowling about with their dogs :—and you see the future inhabitants of your prisons, and penal settlements. Nothing is more common than to find malefactors ascribing their crime and disgrace to Sabbath-breaking.

But is the Christian Sabbath to be observed with Pharisaic rigour ? Perhaps the best reply to this question would be another : Is it certain that the Pharisees did observe the Sabbath rigorously ? That they cavilled at our Lord for healing the sick on the Sabbath-day is true enough ; but it is likewise true that in all this their only care was to find or make matter of accusation against him. They themselves evidently placed no reliance on their own charges, nor did they ever follow them up so far as to seek for the judgment of the law. And from our Lord's declarations we find, that whatever were the superstitious notions of these unhappy men, their own practice fully recognized both the ordinary and the extraordinary laws of providential necessity. They loosed their cattle from the stall, and led them to the watering. If their ox or their ass fell into a ditch, they scrupled not to pull it out. But while our Lord rebuked their hypocrisy,—hypocrisy which their own conduct made evident,—neither by what he said, nor by what he did, is the least intimation conveyed to us, that any portion of the temporal engagements of the six days, is to be continued on the seventh.

I scarcely know how to reply to the objection which, I suppose, is intended to be expressed by the phrase,—Puritanical strictness. I am not sure that I understand it. I fear that as to the greater number by whom it is used, it is utterly unmeaning, except, perhaps, as shewing a deep-rooted dislike to all seriousness in religion. It is true that they who, in the reign of the first Charles, were called Puritans, and their immediate successors, attached great importance to the strict observance of the Sabbath. It is likewise true that their opponents, for the most part, cared as little about it. But is it a settled point that the Puritans were wrong in every thing ? That their opposition to the book of sports, for instance, was Pharisaic and unchristian ? They had their faults, it is true ; for they were men : but the phrase of THE GOOD OLD KING is strictly applicable to them,—‘ There were giants in those days.’ Theological literature is under immense obligations to them. They had their faults ; in some respects, I think, great ones ; but they kept the fire of religion burning, in

the midst of the torrent of ungodliness which, during the days of the unhappy Stuarts, was rushing over the land. And does our constitutional liberty owe them nothing? When Popery and arbitrary power sought to sweep away all the ancient land-marks, the Puritans and their successors stood in the gap, and fought the battle. Often beaten down and trampled on, again and again they arose, and engaged in the contest; and to their persevering, indomitable courage we owe our Bill of Rights. And is it come to this, that while we repose in the enjoyment of blessings which, humanly speaking, but for them had been wrested from us, their very name is to become a term of reproach, even among the professed admirers of liberty; and their love of the Sabbath an argument to dissuade us from the observance of it? I could understand this, if I only found it where I likewise found high admiration of the principles of Archbishop Laud: but when I hear this cry from men of another stamp, I am surprised. I fear, however, the reason is too plain. Two features marked the Puritan character,—love for the Sabbath, and hatred of Popery. They who compliment the last, are not likely to care much for the first. But no historical fact is better supported than this, that to these Puritan principles, despised by our liberal senators, ridiculed by periodical scribblers, who could as soon measure the distance of the fixed stars, as take the altitude of the Puritan mind,—to these Puritan principles we owe the preservation of the lamp of British, Christian liberty, which, but for them, had been extinguished by civil and religious despotism, only to have been rekindled, according to the usual permissions of providence, amidst the wild storms of revolutionary fury. Protestantism and the Sabbath form the palladium of our constitutional freedom. When we cease to value them, we shall have no security, either in earth or heaven, for the continuance of the greatest temporal blessing God can give to man.

But why multiply words on the subject? The question is not what the Pharisees or Puritans did, but what the word of God requires us to do. What saith the scripture? That question we have already answered. To observe the Sabbath as a day of rest from secular engagements, and as a day for devotional exercises, is to observe it scripturally.

And to this scriptural observance of the Sabbath, we now earnestly exhort you. We do so for your own sake. The God

of grace is the God of providence. Keep his day as he commands you, and you may, with humble confidence, look for his blessing. Violate its appointed sanctity, and while you forfeit all spiritual good, you have no right to expect even temporal prosperity. Sabbath labour is unblessed labour. Sabbath gains are unblessed gains. And so it is likely you will find it before you die. But if not, there is another world. Before the Lord of the Sabbath you will have to stand for judgment; and what shall it profit you, even though you had gained the world, if you then find that you have lost your soul?

Be strict in the observance of the Sabbath for the sake of others. By your consistent carefulness admonish them who plead for Baal, and the blessing that shall rest on you shall ultimately refute, and it may be, convert them. However tempted, however assailed, waver not for a moment. Show to the world that a rigid observance of the Sabbath is practicable, is pleasant, is profitable. Let your light, in this respect, shine before men. Witness a good confession, and your testimony shall not be vain.

And Oh, brethren, how delightful is the reflection that your weekly anticipations of the returning Sabbath, are but symbols of those holy, ardent, soul-cheering aspirations, with which the true Christian looks forward to that Sabbath-keeping which remaineth for the people of God! The rest of the Sabbath is a blessed type of the rest of heaven. Life is appointed you for work. Here you have the six days in which you are to labour, and do all you have to do. You toil, it may be, for the meat that perisheth. You labour for that which endureth to everlasting life. You war a good warfare, and often find the conflict to be severe. You run the race set before you, and you feel that but for the strength you receive in waiting upon God, you would utterly faint and fall. You pass through great tribulations; you experience fiery trials. Be of good courage. The day of your redemption draweth nigh. The Sabbath of heaven shall soon dawn. Be not weary in well-doing. The day of rest cometh quickly, and it shall endure for ever. See that dying Saint!—How tranquil the countenance! A holy calm spreads through the chamber of death, and they who sorrow, sorrow not as those without hope. It is the eve of the Sabbath. He dies. Nay, his body has but fallen asleep, and waits for the resurrection of the just. His soul has already entered into rest. Ministering angels have done their last service, and borne

him to Abraham's bosom. He has obtained joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing have fled from him for ever. 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord: they rest from their labours, and their works follow them.' Animated by this hope, pursue your course of duty with holy cheerfulness, and unswerving diligence. Sanctify all the employment of the six days by doing it to the Glory of God. Sacredly observe each returning Sabbath. Go up to the mount where God has appointed to meet you, and he will cause all his goodness to pass before you, strengthening you for duty on earth, and preparing you for blessedness in heaven. The bright and glorious day approaches when, having left this low and troubled scene, we shall come to the general assembly and church of the first-born, mingle with all the excellent of the earth, and with angels, and archangels, and all the company of heaven, for ever worship in the temple, and before the throne of God.

FINIS.



